DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 361 548 CE 064 533

AUTHOR	Nash, Margaret A.; Norden, Tamara
TITLE	Success Skills Curriculum for Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers. Curriculum Guide.
INSTITUTION	Wisconsin Univ., Madison. Vocational Studies Center.
SPONS AGENCY	Wisconsin State Board of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education, Madison.
PUB DATE	91
NOTE	656p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF03 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Behavioral Objectives; Communication Skills; *Competency Based Education; *Daily Living Skills; *Displaced Homemakers; Efficiency; Home Management; Learning Activities; Money Management; *One Parent Family; *Prevocational Education; Responsibility; *Self Actualization; Self Determination; Stress Management; Success; Time Management
IDENTIFIERS	Family Work Relationship

ABSTRACT

This curriculum is designed to meet the unique needs of single parents and displaced homemakers who require additional skill building before entering the job market or a job training program. The curriculum, which is designed as a 36-hour program instruction, contains units on the following topics: taking responsibility for oneself (assessing self-esteem, assessing self-talk, making transitions, maintaining wellness, understanding one's legal rights); communicating effectively (effective verbal communication, listening, and behavior); balancing family, school, and self (managing stress, time, and finances; developing a personal support system; and nurturing other family members and friends); and enhancing effectiveness (developing self-motivation, making appropriate and realistic decisions, accessing role models/mentors, attaining/enhancing basic academic skills; and understanding differences in the work force). Each unit contains the following: unit overview, list of instructor resources, instructor notes, handouts, and activity sheets. Guidelines for leading class discussions and a list of eight workbooks referenced throughout the curriculum are also included. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 361 548

Life Success Curriculum Guide
Activity #6
20-201/202-150-202/102 Vocational
Equity Resource & Technical Assistance
Center

W1925801

Success Skills Curriculum

for Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers

Developed by
Margaret A. Nash
Tamara Norden

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN **OTHER THAN PAPER COPY** HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

B Dougherty

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Directed by
Barbara Dougherty

Curriculum Guide
1991

CE064533

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Success Skills Curriculum

Introduction

Single parents and displaced homemakers often need help planning for a career that will provide them with sufficient income to care for their families. Before getting to the stage of career planning, however, some single parents and displaced homemakers need to develop certain life skills.

This *Success Skills Curriculum for Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers* develops such skills as taking responsibility for self; communicating effectively; balancing family, school, and self; and skills to enhance effectiveness.

Audience

This curriculum guide is designed to meet the unique needs of single parents and displaced homemakers who require additional skill building before entering the job market or a job training program.

Curriculum Length

The *Success Skills Curriculum* is a 36-hour program of instruction. However, instructors can pull out individual units, competencies ar activities and handouts to use independently.

Curriculum Competencies and Indicators and Time Allotments

A list of competencies and indicators and the time allocated for each follows.

UNIT 1: TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF—9 Hours

1.0 Assessment of self-esteem

1.01 Define self-esteem
1.02 Assess one's self-esteem
1.03 Describe one's self-image
1.04 Evaluate attitudes, myths, stereotypes and childhood messages
1.05 Identify leadership skills to improve self-esteem

2.0 Assessment of self-talk

2.01 Define self-talk
2.02 Identify examples of irrational and rational self-talk
2.03 Demonstrate appropriate self-talk

3.0 Skills to make transitions

3.01 Describe the phases of the transitional process
3.02 Identify barriers to effective transitioning
3.03 Develop a personal strategy for transition

4.0 Skills to maintain wellness

4.01 Describe physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual health
4.02 Assess one's state of health
4.03 Identify strategies to maintain health

5.0 Understanding one's legal rights

5.01 Identify legal rights
5.02 Describe the avenues to self-empowerment

UNIT 2: COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY—9 hours

6.0 Skills to effective verbal communication

6.01 Identify different types of communication styles
6.02 Assess assertiveness
6.03 Demonstrate communication styles
6.04 Recognize the effect of non-verbal communication to enhance/inhibit the communication process
6.05 Identify the roles of people in a group

7.0 Skills to effective listening

7.01 Identify listening skills
7.02 Identify barriers to listening
7.03 Demonstrate effective listening skills

8.0 Demonstrate skills to maintain effective behavior

8.01 Demonstrate skills to effectively express ideas and emotions, especially during conflict
8.02 Identify barriers to effective communication
8.03 Demonstrate effective techniques to get what one believes in

UNIT 3: BALANCING FAMILY, SCHOOL, AND SELF—9 hours

9.0 Skills to manage stress

9.01 Define stress/stressors
9.02 Identify causes of stress
9.03 Identify personal responses to stress
9.04 Identify positive ways to manage stress

10.0 Skills to manage time

10.01 Identify the importance of practicing time management
10.02 Identify personal barriers to time management
10.03 Identify time wasting/procrastinating behavior
10.04 Develop organizational skills
10.05 Identify positive time management techniques to balance family, school and self
10.06 Identify community resources

11.0 Skills for making ends meet financially

11.01 Assess financial attitude
11.02 Define financial management
11.03 Identify personal financial assets and liabilities
11.04 Develop a personal financial plan
11.05 Identify community resources for financial management

12.0 Skills to develop a personal support system

12.01 Define support system
12.02 Identify personal areas in need of support
12.03 Identify community resources for support systems
12.04 Demonstrate skills to develop a personal support system

13.0 Skills to nurture other family members and friends

13.01 Describe nurturing
13.02 Identify personal positive and negative aspects of own nurturance
13.03 Demonstrate positive nurturing skills
13.04 Identify community resources for nurturing family members and friends

UNIT 4: SKILLS TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS—9 hours

14.0 Skills to develop self-motivation

14.01 Identify appropriate motivational models
14.02 Develop a personal motivational plan
14.03 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's personal motivational plan
14.04 Identify resources to help deal with roadblocks

15.0 Skills to make appropriate and realistic decisions

15.01 Identify problem-solving models
15.02 Apply critical thinking to personal problem solving
15.03 Identify decision-making models
15.04 Develop an individual decision-making/problem-solving action plan
15.05 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's plan
15.06 Identify resources and strategies to overcome roadblocks and achieve one's plan

16.0 Skills to access role models/mentors

16.01 Define mentoring
16.02 Identify the benefits of a mentoring relationship
16.03 Identify potential mentors
16.04 Demonstrate confidence in asking for support, information and assistance

17.0 Attaining/enhancing basic academic skills

17.01 Identify common barriers to academic success
17.02 Demonstrate skills in overcoming barriers
17.03 Identify technical skill deficiencies
17.04 Demonstrate skills in overcoming technical skill deficiencies
17.05 Identify potential barriers to success in a nontraditional occupation
17.06 Assess study skill deficiencies
17.07 Identify and access resources for continuous study skills improvement

18.0 Understanding differences in the workforce

18.01 Develop an awareness of differences in cultures
18.02 Identify changing workforce and personal impact upon the workforce
18.03 Develop empathy in working with people from different cultures
18.04 Identify benefits of working with other cultures

Curriculum Components

Each indicator includes the following components which will be discussed below in more detail: Overview, Additional Resources, Instructor Notes, Activity, and Handout.

Overview

At the beginning of each competency is a general overview of the content. There also is a detailed overview that lists the intent of each indicator, content, instructional strategies, and instructional resources.

The *content section* highlights the content of a particular instructional strategy or instructional resource.

The *instructional strategies section* lists the format suggested to teach the specific content. The strategies could include: instructor notes, instructor resource, handout, activity, roleplay, panel, speaker(s), discussion, etc. These will be discussed in more detail below.

The *instructional resource section* lists the title of the instructor notes, instructor resource, activity, handout, or section of a workbook. In some indicators, there are more instructional resources than can be used in the time given. Instructors can choose the materials that will work best for their group.

Instructor Resources

A list of additional resources have been included as further background information or reference material for the instructor. This list follows the Overview for each competency. These may be given to the participants if the instructor feels the information is relevant.

Instructor Notes

This component will provide the instructor with background information on a particular topic. This information can be used as the basis for a lecture or discussion. The text is written in the right-hand column thus allowing the instructor to jot notes for future reference in the left-hand column. Sometimes highlights of this information also is presented in the form of overheads to accompany the lecture.

Handouts

Some information is presented to participants on handouts. Discussions may be centered around this information.

Activity Sheets

In order to provide the participants with practical experience with the subject material, a variety of classroom activities have been included in the curriculum guide. There are several things you can do as an instructor to get the most out of these activities.

Introduce the activity in this order:

1. Describe the activity briefly.
2. Explain how the activity relates to the indicator for a particular competency.
3. Give the time limits.
4. Give instructions clearly.
5. Hand out the instructional materials only after you have given the instructions.
6. Pause for questions about the instructions.
7. Tell participants when to start.
8. Do not interrupt once the activity has begun.

Monitor the activity:

1. Circulate in the classroom to gauge how the participants are progressing.
2. Answer questions individually.
3. Announce the time remaining near the end of the activity.
4. If extra time is an option, ask, "Who needs more time?" Refrain from asking, "Is everyone finished?"

Debrief the activity with the entire group:

1. With participant contributions, summarize the learning points from the activity.
2. Relate these points to the original objective for the activity.
3. Discuss issues that need more clarification.
4. Provide a linking statement for a smooth transition into the next topic or activity.

Classroom Discussions

Discussions can be a useful tool for encouraging active involvement throughout the course. Some strategies for handling discussions are:

Introduce the discussion by setting the scene and stating the objectives:

- What is the purpose of the discussion?
- Why is it important for them?
- What will they get out it?

Start the discussion in one of the following ways:

- Describe a situation and ask participants how they would handle it.
- Set up a hypothetical situation and give the group a choice of action, neither of which is acceptable. A reasonable third alternative will result while debating the pros and cons of each.
- Ask a question directed at the entire group to kick off the discussion without threatening anyone in particular.

Maintain the discussion once it gets started:

- Guide, don't dominate, the group. Avoid talking too much or interrupting participants when they are talking. Questions asked of you by other participants should be redirected whenever possible.

- Wait before giving participants the correct answer; allow time for them to think. More effective learning will take place this way than if you provide them with the answers.

- Be flexible when participants get off the track, but if they get too far for too long bring them back to the topic through normal conversation.

- Avoid making judgmental statements about participants or their viewpoint.

- Use a variety of questions to keep the discussion going, provide participants feedback, and encourage those not participating to join the discussion.

Summarize the discussion:

It is important to summarize a discussion to review and to reinforce the important learning points. Some summarizing techniques are:

- Keep the summary short.
- Relate the most important learning points back to the purpose.
- If additional points need to be made, do this before the summary. Note that this is a summary of what *was* said, not what you *wish* was said.
- If you expect participants to summarize, let them know at the beginning so they have an adequate opportunity to do it well.

Referenced Material

Workbooks that have been referenced throughout the curriculum are listed below. These are excellent resources that instructors may want to purchase.

Balancing Work and Family
Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute, 3554 White Bear Ave, White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110.

Career Smart: Curriculum Guide For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions, Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, 3554 White Bear Ave., White Bear Lake, MN 55110.

Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide
Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education, 65 South Front Street, Columbus, OH 43266-0308.

Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs
Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Project Discover: Handbook and Curriculum Guide
Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Coon Rapids Campus, 11200 Mississippi Blvd., Coon Rapids, MN 55433-3470.

Reentry Women Project Curriculum
Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, 235 North National Avenue, P.O. Box 1940, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54936-1940.

Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report
Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Capital Tower Plaza, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers
Vocational and Technical Education, Department of Education, P.O. Box 30009, Lansing, MI 48909.

Success Skills Curriculum
for Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers

Success Skills was initiated by Fran Johnson, Sex Equity Consultant, Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education (WBVTAE) and supported through the Single Parent set-aside of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, P. L. 98-524.

Special appreciation goes to the Advisory Committee for this curriculum. This group developed the outline and stayed involved throughout the process of compiling this resource. Advisory Committee members include:

Barbara Dougherty, Vocational Studies Center
Lianne Grefsheim, Vocational Studies Center
Karen Isebrands, Nicolet VTAE
Fran Johnson, WBVTAE
Dorothy Kramlich, Fox Valley Technical College
Miki Martin-Erschnig, Waukesha County Technical College
Katherine McNellis, Lakeshore Technical College
Sylvia Nelson, Chippewa Valley Technical College
Molly Sandleback, Western Wisconsin VTAE
Maureen Simon, Lakeshore VTAE
Joan Visintainer, Moraine Park Technical College

In addition to the Advisory Committee, many other people participated in this project by reviewing and commenting on an early draft and suggesting materials for inclusion. Many thanks to the following people (and any whose names have been omitted inadvertently) for their work and insights:

Denise Aigner, Lakeshore Technical College
Elaine Bloyer, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Nan Brennan, Chippewa Valley Technical College
Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College
Judith Erickson, Western Wisconsin Technical College
Mary Fortier, Nicolet Area Technical College
Gloria Gonzales, Milwaukee Area Technical College
Jean Holzer, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Esta Lewin, Gateway Technical College
Deb McDonald, Mid-State Technical College
Carolyn Michalski, Northcentral Technical College
Debbra Reichert, Madison Area Technical College
Libby Sellars, Waukesha County Technical College
Karen Showers, Blackhawk Technical College
Judy Stanton, Lakeshore Technical College
Carol Wilmot, Lakeshore Technical College

It has been our intention to receive written permission prior to reprinting materials and to give proper attribution for all materials used in this curriculum. Some materials, however, have been circulating without attribution for years, and we were unable to track down—or even identify—the original author(s). Please contact us with any corrections and we will make the appropriate changes in the next edition of the curriculum.

Distribution limited to Wisconsin Technical Colleges

Copyright ©1991 by Vocational Studies Center
School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The University of Wisconsin-Madison does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, creed, religion, sexual orientation, color, marital status, disability, national origin or ancestry.

Unit 1
Taking Responsibility for Self

Note to Instructors: Plan on spending nine classroom hours on "Unit 1: Taking Responsibility for Self." The nine hours can be divided in any way that best meets the needs of your group. If you choose to divide the time evenly among the five Competencies, then spend roughly 1 hour and 45 minutes on each Competency.

Unit 1 includes:

1.0 Assessment of Self-Esteem
2.0 Assessment of Self-Talk
3.0 Skills to Make Transitions
4.0 Skills to Maintain Wellness
5.0 Understanding One's Legal Rights

Competency 1.0

Assessment of self-esteem

1.01 Define self-esteem.
1.02 Assess one's self-esteem.
1.03 Describe one's self-image.
1.04 Evaluate attitudes, myths, stereotypes and childhood messages.
1.05 Identify leadership skills to improve self-esteem.

Competency 1.0
Overview

Self-esteem is the measure of how people feel about themselves; it describes how positively or negatively they view their own self-image. A healthy level of self-esteem is a necessary cornerstone for pursuing almost anything, from personal goals to career aspirations. Yet for women, low self-esteem is a common problem, one which keeps them from realizing their full potential. Dealing with issues of self-esteem, then, is a necessary first step in developing the sort of "success skills" this curriculum stresses.

This competency addresses issues of self-esteem as they relate to single parents and displaced homemakers, both helping to identify problems with low self-esteem and presenting methods for improving self-esteem. Participants completing Competency 1.0: Assessment of Self-Esteem will be able to:

1.01 Define self-esteem
1.02 Assess one's self-esteem
1.03 Describe one's self-image
1.04 Evaluate attitudes, myths, stereotypes and childhood messages
1.05 Identify leadership skills to improve self-esteem

The first section, Indicator 1.01, offers a working definition of self-esteem and addresses self-esteem as an important issue for women. Indicator 1.02 provides a number of different exercises to help participants evaluate their own level of self-esteem. Following this, the participants are invited to examine their personal self-concept in Indicator 1.03. Indicator 1.04 addresses the gender stereotypes, socialized behavior patterns, and childhood messages that affect the way we feel about ourselves. Finally, Indicator 1.05 identifies the means by which participants can improve their self-esteem.

Competency 1.0: Assessment of Self-Esteem

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
1.01	Define self-esteem	Lecture	*Self-Esteem: Making the Connections, Defining the Terms*
1.02	Assess one's self-esteem	Activity	*How Well Do You Like Yourself?*
		Activity	*Positive Profile Point Quiz*
		Activity	*Characteristics of High and Low Self-Esteem*
1.03	Describe one's self-image	Activity	*Seeing Ourselves as Friends*
		Activity	*Self-Concept Collage*
1.04	Evaluate attitudes, myths, stereotypes and childhood messages	Lecture	*Challenging Stereotypes About Men and Women*
		Activity/discussion	*Discussing Stereotypes About Men and Women*
		Activity	*The High Cost of Low Self-Esteem*
		Activity	*Role Models in Childhood*

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
1.04	(continued)	Discussion	*How Socialization Messages May Negatively Affect Assertion*
		Discussion	*My Rights as a Person*
		Discussion	*Guidelines to Feelings*
1.05	Identify leadership skills to improve self-esteem	Discussion	*The Confidence Game*
		Discussion	*The Positive Approach*
		Activity	*The Diamond of My Life*

Resources

Bass, Ellen, and Davis, Laura. (1988). The courage to heal: A guide for women survivors of child sexual abuse. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Beattie, Melody. (1988). Codependent no more: How to stop controlling others and start caring for yourself. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Briggs, Dorothy C. (1977). Celebrate your self. New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc.

Clarke, Jean Illsley. (1978). Self-esteem: A family affair. Minneapolis, MN: Winston Press, Inc.

Elkins, Dov Peretz. (1978). Teaching people to love themselves: A leader's handbook of theory and technique for self-esteem and affirmation training. Rochester, NY: Growth Associates.

Ellis, Albert, and Harper, Robert A. (1975). A new guide to rational living. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Havey, Carol V. (1987). Women and self-confidence: How to take charge of your life. Joliet, IL: Positive Printing Press.

Hay, Lousie L. (1987). You can heal your life. Santa Monica, CA: Hay House, Inc.

Jeffers, Susan. (1987). Feel the fear and do it anyway. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Lerner, Harriet G. (1985). Dance of anger: A woman's guide to changing the patterns of intimate relationships. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

McGinnis, Alan L. (1987). Confidence: How to succeed at being yourself. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House.

Rea, Lorraine. (1981). The woman within. Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center.

Sanford, Linda Tschirhart and Donovan, Mary Ellen. (1985). Women and self-esteem: Understanding and improving the way we think and feel about ourselves. New York: Penguin Books.

Simon, Sidney B. (1989). Getting unstuck: Breaking through your barriers to change. New York: Warner Books.

What you should know about self-esteem. (1983). South Deerfield, MA: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc. (Note: A 16-page illustrated booklet. For more information, call 413/665-7611.)

Self-Esteem: Making the Connections, Defining the Terms

Self-esteem is something probably everyone wants and which everyone definitely needs. We want self-esteem because it increases our chance of finding happiness in life and makes it possible to cope with life's disappointments and changes. We need self-esteem because nothing is as important to psychological well-being. Our level of self-esteem affects virtually everything we think, say and do. It affects how we see the world and our place in it. It affects how others in the world see and treat us. It affects the choices we make—choices about what we will do with our lives and with whom we will be involved. It affects our ability to both give and receive love. And it affects our ability to take action to change things that need to be changed. If a woman has an insufficient amount of self-esteem, she will not be able to act in her own best interest. And if a woman has no self-esteem at all, she will become overwhelmed, immobile and eventually will "give up."[1]

Many women unfortunately have gone through life with a minimum of self-esteem—just enough to enable their survival, but not enough to enable them to live as fully and to be as happy as they might have been. Although everyone needs it, in our culture women's need of self-esteem has traditionally been seen as less great and less urgent than men's need. According to an age-old double standard, high self-esteem is an exclusively male prerogative. In men it is seen as a moral good, and a man who likes and values himself and lets the world know it is considered normal and is said to be demonstrating a healthy self-interest. But a woman who likes and values herself and lets the world know it is condemned for being vain, arrogant and conceited.[2]

But exactly what do we mean when we use the term self-esteem? In everyday conversation and in

Reprinted from Linda Tschirhart Sanford and Mary Ellen Donovan, *Women and Self-Esteem: Understanding and Improving the Way We Think and Feel About Ourselves,* 1985, by permission of Penguin Books.

the professional literature the term is often thrown about loosely, used interchangeably with self-respect, self-love and self-worth, and also with the term "self-concept." In fact, though, these terms are not all interchangeable. The self-concept or self-image is the set of beliefs and images we all have and hold to be true of ourselves. By contrast, our level of self-esteem (or self-respect, self-love or self-worth) is the measure of how much we like and approve of our self-concept.[3] Or, as we've heard it put, "self-esteem is the reputation you have with yourself."[4]

A person's self-concept will usually contain a wide variety of images and beliefs. Some of these are simply statements of fact whose accuracy is easily verifiable: I am a woman; I am tall; I am black; I am a mother; I am a student; I am a lesbian; I am a secretary; I am poor. Others refer to less tangible aspects of the self, and their accuracy is not so easy to verify: I am smart; I am ugly; I am incompetent; I am sexy; I am unlovable; I am no good; I am worthless.

All the various beliefs and images that go into our self-concepts have one thing in common: None was with us at birth. To be sure, everyone is born with concrete physical characteristics and undiscovered capacities. But no one is born knowing she is male or female, black or white; nor does anyone come into the world already thinking she is stupid or smart, pretty or ugly, shy or outgoing, strong or weak, lovable or unlovable, generally inadequate or basically okay. As far as ideas and impressions of herself are concerned, the newborn can be said to begin life with a "blank slate." Just as she later learns that she is a girl, that her hair is black, that her name is Susie Brown and that she is the daughter of John and Mary Brown, so, too, she learns to think of herself as stupid or smart, pretty or ugly, shy or outgoing, strong or weak, lovable or unlovable, generally inadequate or basically okay.

Many of the basic ideas we have about ourselves were acquired prior to adulthood, and from two main sources: how others treated us and what they told us about ourselves. In early infancy, nonverbal communication played the most crucial role: Depending on how much affection, food, touching and physical warmth was received, for example, we as infants obtained general impressions about whether we were loved and worthy. Then with the development of language capacity we began to translate these general impressions into specific words within our minds, and what others told us about ourselves started to have as much impact on our developing self-concepts as how they treated us. As Morris Rosenberg puts it, "People, as social animals, are deeply influenced by the attitudes of others toward the self" and over the course of time, we come to view ourselves essentially as we are viewed by others.[5]

As we grew up and learned basic ideas about who we are and what we're about, each of us also learned strong ideas about who we should be and what we should be like. Whereas our ideas about who we actually are make up the self-concept or perceived or "as is" self, our ideas about who we should be form our ideal self. Typically we constantly compare our perceived self to our ideal self, and the wider the gap between the two the lower our level of self-esteem.

None of the ideal standards by which we judge ourselves was with us at birth. Just as no one comes into the world already thinking of herself as a girl, no one comes into the world with any idea whatsoever of what it means to be a good girl. We had to be taught to believe we should be a certain way, and the specific ideals and standards by which we judge ourselves will vary from culture to culture, and even from individual to individual within the same culture.

Taken one by one, each image and belief that goes into a woman's self-concept has bearing on her self-esteem. But the self-concept is not simply a sum of its parts, for when we put the various images and beliefs we have of ourselves together in our minds, we don't give each one equal weight and prominence. Rather, we put the various components together so that the self-concept resembles a collage. Those beliefs and images that are most important to our identity and sense of self-worth (for example, I am a woman; I am a mother; I am incompetent/competent; I am pretty/ugly) will be placed in the center and foreground of the collage, and constitute the core self-concept. Those beliefs and images that are less important to our identity and sense of self-worth (for example, I am a good cook; I am left-handed; I am unathletic) will be placed toward the periphery of the collage, outside the core of the self-concept.

Because of the way we structure our self-concepts, it's possible to have a self-concept containing mostly positive beliefs—a positive self-concept—and still lack self-esteem. No matter how many positive images and beliefs a woman has of herself, if she puts them off to the side of her self-concept, downplaying their importance, low self-esteem will result.

---

[1] Ernest Becker gives a good description of the effects of self-esteem in *The Birth and Death of Meaning,* 2nd ed., (New York: The Free Press, 1971), chaps. 8, 9, 10.

[2] The double standard that says self-love is a moral virtue in men but a fault in women is discussed further in Lionel Trilling, *Beyond Culture: Essays on Literature and Learning* (New York: The Viking Press, 1965), pp. 38-39.

[3] We were greatly aided in our attempt to define the self-concept and the different kinds of self-esteem by two books: Morris Rosenberg, *Conceiving the Self* (New York: Basic Books, 1979) and Stanley Coopersmith, *The Antecedents of Self-Esteem* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1967).

[4] Thanks to William Appleton for this definition of self-esteem.

[5] Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 63.

Activity: How Well Do You Like Yourself?

1. Pass out "How Well Do You Like Yourself?" Go over the instructions. Ask the participants to mark their responses quickly, based on their first impression (allow five minutes total). Stress being honest. Emphasize that they will not be sharing these answers with anyone unless they so choose.

2. Tell the participants to score the quiz by adding the numbers.

44 - 55	Very high self-esteem, positive self-worth, accept one's self as okay.
34 - 43	Self-esteem is okay, good self-worth, fairly well-accepting of self and station in life. May wish to improve a little on self-image.
24 - 33	Self-esteem is low, but still okay. Acceptance of self and one's worth is less than one might like. Could do work on improving one's self-image and accepting one's self as being the only one they have.
Below 24	Person is in **not okay** position. Self-worth and self-esteem lower than desirable. Needs encouragement and support from others. Needs work on changing "losing" attitudes and behaviors.

3. You might discuss with participants why a 0 or a 1 was marked for a given item. Be careful not to put the person down if he or she shares why. Don't let other participants try to argue the person out of a low score. Just listen! Ask the participants to think of one thing each can do to better accept himself or herself in order to improve self-image in relation to that item.

Compiled by J. Jones, Southwest District Specialist, Home Economics, and J. Morgan-Coures, Preble County Extension Agent, Home Economics, Ohio Cooperative Extension Service. Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

How Well Do You Like Yourself?

Here is a way of looking at your self-concept. By truthfully answering the following statements, you can get a general idea of how happy you are with yourself. Next to each statement, put a number that reflects your feelings about the statement.

3 if it's true most of the time
2 if it's true some of the time
1 if it's only rarely true
0 if it's not true at all

_____ 1. I enjoy waking up in the morning.

_____ 2. I'm usually in a good mood, day or night.

_____ 3. When I look in a mirror, I really like what I see.

_____ 4. If I were a member of the opposite sex, I'd find me quite attractive.

_____ 5. I really enjoy my work.

_____ 6. I always have plenty of energy.

_____ 7. I'm basically quite an optimistic person.

_____ 8. I can laugh at my mistakes.

_____ 9. If I could live my life over, there is very little I'd change in things I've done.

_____ 10. I'm a very interesting person.

_____ 11. I like the direction that I am growing and changing as a person.

_____ 12. Other people really show they care about me.

_____ 13. I am a kind and loving person.

_____ 14. The people I care about really value my opinions and ideas.

_____ 15. I do not wish that I were someone else.

_____ 16. I'm not afraid to express my feelings.

_____ 17. There aren't very many people I'd trade places with in life.

_____ 18. I lead an interesting and rewarding life.

Compiled by J. Jones, Southwest District Specialist, Home Economics, and J. Morgan-Coures, Preble County Extension Agent, Home Economics, Ohio Cooperative Extension Service. Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

Positive Profile Point Quiz

Directions: Add or subtract points below to determine your "P.Q." (Positive Quotient). (+ means add; - means subtract).

+ 5 if you...

______ Enjoy your life most of the time.
______ Make some time for yourself each day.
______ Try to see the positive in negative events.
______ Are an active member of an organization or group.
______ Enjoy change.
______ Are willing to take a risk.
______ Look for the best in others.
______ Enjoy being alone with yourself.
______ Like yourself most of the time.
______ Are becoming more assertive about doing what you think is right.
______ Have thought of some more alternatives for your future.
______ Are in good overall physical condition.
______ Have several coping mechanisms for yourself.
______ Share with others your talents and abilities.
______ Have done something nice for someone else today.

- 5 if you...

______ You often say "if only," "but," or "can't."
______ Want things to stay the same.
______ Often procrastinate and put off what needs to be done.
______ Often remain silent about issues that are important to you.
______ Emphasize the negative aspects of life and the future.

Your total points = ________ Compare your total points to the scale below:

75 points = You are positive plus and can cope with anything.
60 - 70 = You are positive most of the time and can handle life well.
45 - 55 = You are sometimes positive and may want to try to maximize the positive.
30 - 40 = Once in a while you are positive, but you may want to try to minimize the negative.
0 - 25 = You are seldom positive and may be "happier being unhappy" - think about it!

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Characteristics of High and Low Self-Esteem

Directions: Determine whether each of the following phrases is characteristic of high or of low self-esteem. Draw a line through the phrases that characterize low self-esteem.

- Believes strongly in certain principles and values
- Is overly sensitive to criticism
- Is afraid to make a mistake
- Is overly critical of others and self
- Is capable of acting in own best judgment
- Has few health problems
- Blames others
- Genuinely enjoys self and life
- Participates in wide variety of activities
- Feels equal to others as a person
- Feels persecuted
- Fears competition
- Is reluctant to try new things
- Is over-responsive to praise
- Resists efforts of peers to dominate or sway
- Feels confident in ability to deal with challenging situations, despite failures and setbacks
- Is sensitive to needs of others
- Is shy, timid, withdrawn

Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

- Is uncertain of own opinions and values
- May be jealous and possessive
- Is flexible, adaptable in changing situations
- Cares about others
- Has difficulty entering loving relationships
- Is happy, energetic, enthusiastic
- Enjoys life

Seeing Ourselves as Friends

Directions: Get very comfortable in a chair. Close your eyes. Picture someone you love or like very much sitting across from you. Tell that person a few things you like about him or her. Say at least three things. Go on if you can. Stop when you feel ready.

Was that difficult for you? Could you see him or her clearly? How many things did you have to say?

Now try to visualize yourself sitting across from you. Tell yourself at least three things you like about yourself. Go on if you can. Stop when you feel ready. Remember, at least three things.

Was that more or less difficult than the first exercise? Could you see yourself as clearly? Did you have as many things to say about yourself?

Nearly all of the women in our groups had an easier time visualizing and complimenting their imaginary friend than themselves. Don't think ill of yourself if this is the case with you too.

Reprinted from Linda Tschirhart Sanford and Mary Ellen Donovan, *Women and Self-Esteem: Understanding and Improving the Way We Think and Feel About Ourselves,* 1985, by permission of Penguin Books.

Self-Concept Collage

Often it is helpful to create an actual collage to delineate what your self-concept contains. Take a sheet of paper and place on it symbols (words, drawings, images from magazines) which represent your beliefs about yourself. Place in the middle of the sheet those beliefs about yourself which you consider most important to your identity and self-worth; this is the core self-concept. Away from the core toward the periphery, place those other beliefs about yourself that are less important to your identity and self-worth. The collage might include straight-forward facts (I am a woman, I am black, I am tall, I am a lover), interests (I play tennis, I am a political activist, I love cats, I study Spanish) and attributes (I am smart, I am ugly, I am ill-tempered, I am funny). Whatever you feel is important about you—no matter if you believe it is negative or positive or neutral—should have a place on the collage.

You might want to use this collage as a point of reference as you learn more about how your self-concept was formed. As you identify inaccurate, negative beliefs about yourself, you might consider symbolically replacing them with more accurate, positive beliefs. Or perhaps you will want to shift images from your periphery into the core or vice versa.

The Ideal Self-Concept

It can also be helpful to make a collage representing your ideal self—the self you feel you want to be and/or should be. Compare this with the collage of who you believe you really are. Is the gap between them insurmountable? If so, can you revise your notions of who you should be so that they are more reasonable?

Reprinted from Linda Tschirhart Sanford and Mary Ellen Donovan, *Women and Self-Esteem: Understanding and Improving the Way We Think and Feel About Ourselves,* 1985, by permission of Penguin Books.

Challenging Stereotypes About Men and Women

All of us are affected by stereotypes about men and women. Some people think that these stereotypes reflect "The Absolute Truth," instead of simply a culture-specific and time-specific belief.

What do we mean by culture-specific? Here is an example of culture-specific beliefs about men and women: In some countries, women are not allowed to drive cars. In those cultures, it is considered unfeminine for a woman to drive a car. In mainstream U.S. culture, however, it is considered perfectly appropriate for a woman to drive.

Here is another example: Very few women were admitted to medical school in the U.S. before the 1970s. Yet, in the Soviet Union, being a physician has long been considered "women's work."

What are other examples of culture-specific roles for men and women?

What do we mean by time-specific? Here is an example of a time-specific belief about men and women: Not so long ago in this country, it was unthinkable that a man would work with small children. Now it is fairly common to see male day care workers.

Here is another example: Up until ten or fifteen years ago, it was not considered appropriate for women to be athletic. Up through the 1970s, when girls played basketball in gym class, they were only allowed to run half-court; it was thought to be too strenuous to permit girls to run the length of the basketball court. Now athletic women are considered healthy and attractive. Women run marathons and compete in a wide range of athletic events.

By Margaret A. Nash, Vocational Studies Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991.

What are other examples of time-specific roles for men and women?

The point is that current stereotypes about men and women *seem* like they are unquestionable truths. But they only seem that way because we are so used to hearing them. We need to challenge our assumptions about what are women's roles and men's roles. Then we can choose for ourselves what roles we want to play in our lives.

Activity: Discussing Stereotypes About Men and Women

Here are some ideas for activities that look at differences in how our culture thinks about men and women. Have participants do one or more of these activities at home, and then discuss them in class. Or, use one or more of these ideas as starting points for in-class discussions.

1. Select several advertisements from TV, magazines or radio and use them to show how women and men are viewed by the people who create ads. For example, ads can be directed at the woman as a housewife, a mother, a sex object, a professional. Ads can be directed at the man as a sports enthusiast, a financial wizards, a professional, a breadwinner, a father.

2. Compare the advertising appeals of different magazines. Look at Sports Illustrated and Ms., for instance, or Newsweek and McCall's. Who are the ads directed to in each magazine? Are there differences by gender? What is the tone of the ads? What do such differences tell you about the magazine? What do the differences tell you about the audience for whom each magazine is intended?

3. Have an influential career woman in the community speak to the class. Or have several come as a panel. Or ask participants to go out and interview an influential woman. Or use any of these formats for women who work in traditionally male jobs.

   Ask questions such as: how did you become interested in your career? How did your family feel about you going into this kind of work? What obstacles did you have to overcome? Do you feel there has been discrimination against you in terms of your salary, advancement, job responsibility? Do you recommend that other women follow in your footsteps?

4. Consider what might change if you had been born the other gender. How would your life be different? How might your career goals be different? Do career or job choices change? Is the range of career choices broader for one gender than the other? Is there evidence of sex-role stereotyping in career choices? Why?

5. Make a list of clichés about men and women. Examples: Men are logical. Women are emotional. Discuss the truth of these bits of "wisdom."

Adapted from "41 Ways to Teach About Sex Role Stereotyping," by Pauline B. Gough.

6. Choose one children's cartoon series on television and watch it at least four times. How are male and female characters portrayed on the show? In one or two words, how would you describe each character as he or she is portrayed (intelligent, stupid, courageous, aggressive, helpless, strong, weak)?

7. Watch one family situation comedy on television for several weeks. How do the roles of fathers, mothers, sons and daughters on the show compare with family life as you know it? You might also analyze the show on the basis of race and ethnicity.

8. Choose one comic strip or cartoon series from the newspaper. Characterize the males and females shown in the cartoon.

9. Listen to popular music on the radio. How are men and women depicted by writers of song lyrics?

10. Visit the toy department of a local store. List toy packages that show girls only, and those that show boys only. Which toys and activities are for girls and which are for boys? Also note toy packages that show both boys and girls. Which toys are those? On those packages, are there differences in what boys and girls are doing in the picture?

11. Analyze some aspect of news coverage. Examples: column inches devoted to girls' sports versus boys' sports; ways in which men and women are referred to in headlines; number of articles about news that primarily concerns women; gender of news reporters.

The High Cost of Low Self-Esteem

There are several ways that low self-esteem manifests itself in the thinking patterns and behavior of women. One aspect is the curtailed and repressive behavior that some women will exhibit because of subconscious negative tapes which constantly remind them of their lack of worth.

Use the examples below to explore whether or not this type of negative thinking has affected your behavior.

Example 1: Clouding

"Clouding" is taking a specific piece of criticism, insignificant mistake, or passing comment and blowing it up into a reflection of, or an attack on, our overall self-worth.

Such as:
- becoming depressed when someone says you look tired
- putting self down for mistakes
- feeling insulted (rather than annoyed) by rude clerks

Personal Example of "Clouding": ________________________________

____

____

Example 2: Critical Tapes:

Behavior: "Critical Taping" consists of powerful statements or visions that portray a negative image. Persons "conjure up" these messages and waste much time and energy re-running past embarrassments or put-downs, usually confirming the negative thinking.

Such as:
- I'm so ugly I ought to hide.
- I'm so disorganized I'll never finish.
- Those I love always leave.

Personal Example of "Critical Taping": ____________________________

____

____

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report,* June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Example 3: Comparison to Others:

Behavior: Constant comparisons to others to see who is in the better/worse position in terms of looks, money, jobs, etc.

Such as:
- If only I had her relationship—I'd be so happy.
- If I had her money—I wouldn't worry.

Personal Example of Comparison to Others: ______________________________

____

____

Example 4: Expectations of Perfection:

Demanding perfection concerns measuring not by what you accomplished, but by what was left undone. There is a tendency for "all-or-nothing" thinking in that if something isn't done perfectly, then it is worthless. This robs the person of *any* sense of accomplishment and promotes self-hate. Perfectionism promotes "if . . . then" thinking, that if we do something perfectly, everything will be all right.

Such as:
- I should have gotten 100 instead of 92 on that test.
- If I lose weight, then he will love me.

Personal Example of Expecting Perfection: ______________________________

____

____

Example 5: Expectations of Doom:

"Expecting Doom" turns common problems, nuisances, and ambiguous situations into impending tragedies. Persons expecting doom shift the focus from the situation itself to the inability to cope with the situation. For some persons, being rescued becomes part of the "expectation of doom" syndrome.

Such as:
- The boss asked to see me . . . I'm probably going to be fired.
- I can't stand it . . . you've got to do something.

Personal Example of Expecting Doom: ____________________

Example 6: Inability to Accept Compliments:

By embracing criticism and rejecting compliments, many persons try to achieve a backhand self-esteem based on false humility or martyrdom. Some persons think the acceptance of compliments leads to self-conceit. Low self-esteem manifests itself when the person must convince the compliment-giver that "once you get to know me, you won't think I'm so hot."

Such as:
- Oh, it's nothing, really . . .
- Well, it really doesn't fit me.

Or ignoring: I really liked what you had to say . . .
And attending to: That's the most ridiculous thing I ever heard.
Because deep down we think that compliment-givers are insincere and criticisms are truthful.

Personal Example of Inability to Accept Compliments: ____________________

Reminders for All Examples:

1. Thought stopping: Stop the old message and substitute cognitive antidote.
2. Check out early learning for message imprinting. Release yourself from the prison of early messages.
3. Forgive yourself for being less than perfect.
4. Learn to enjoy yourself. Congratulate yourself for small victories. Accept compliments graciously. Look for ways to cheer up others.

Role Models In Childhood

Think back to your childhood. Who was the most available person in your life? Who was the warmest? Who was the most powerful? Considering your answers to these questions, who was your primary role model?

If it was someone other than one of your parents, think of three helpful traits, behaviors or interests this person modeled for you. Think of three unhelpful traits, behaviors or interests this person modeled for you.

If your primary model was a parent, then do the same for both your model and your other parent.

How have each of the above, good and bad, contributed to your self-concept? How have they affected your self-esteem?

Competition

Was your primary role model competitive with you in any aspect of your life? What happened when he or she felt threatened? How did this make you feel? How has this experience influenced you as an adult?

To Be An Adult

Think about how your mother, and other significant female models, shaped your perception of options for you. What was her (their) attitude toward your taking risks? What was her (their) interpersonal style? Again, think about how this has influenced you as an adult.

What is your image of an adult woman? How closely do you come to this? How closely aligned is your image of the adult woman with your ideal self? Can you think of changes you have to make to lessen the gap between your concept of an adult woman and your own self-concept? There are many alternative images of what it is to be an adult woman.

Reprinted from Linda Tschirhart Sanford and Mary Ellen Donovan, *Women and Self-Esteem: Understanding and Improving the Way We Think and Feel About Ourselves,* 1985, by permission of Penguin Books.

How Socialization Messages May Negatively Affect Assertion

Socialization message:	Think of others first: give to others even if you're hurting. Don't be selfish.
Effect on rights:	I have no right to place my needs above those of other people.
Effect on assertive behavior:	When I have a conflict with someone else, I will give in and satisfy the other person's needs and forget about my own.
Healthy message:	To be selfish means that a person places his/her desires before practically everyone else's desires. This is undesirable human behavior. However, all healthy people have needs and strive to fulfill these as much as possible. Your needs are as important as other people's. When there is a conflict over need satisfaction, compromise is often a useful way to handle the conflict.

Socialization message:	Be modest and humble. Don't act superior to other people.
Effect on rights:	I have no right to do anything which would imply that I am better than other people.
Effect on assertive behavior:	I will discontinue my accomplishments and discount compliments I receive. When I'm in a meeting, I will encourage other people's contributions and keep silent about my own. When I have an opinion which is different from someone else's, I won't express it; who am I to say that my opinion is better than another person's?
Healthy message:	It is undesirable to build yourself up at the expense of another person. However, you have as much right as other people to show your abilities and take pride in yourself. It is healthy to enjoy one's accomplishments.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Socialization message: Be understanding and overlook trivial irritations. Don't be a bitch and complain.

Effect on rights: I have no right to feel angry or express my anger.

Effect on assertive behavior: When I'm in a line and someone cuts in from of me, I will say nothing. I will not tell my woman friend that I don't like her constantly interrupting me when I speak.

Healthy message: It is undesirable to deliberately nit-pick. However, life is made up of trivial incidents and it is normal to be occasionally irritated by seemingly small events. You have a right to your angry feelings, and if you express them at the time they occur, your feelings won't build up and explode. It is important, however, to express your feelings assertively rather than aggressively.

Socialization message: Help other people. Don't be demanding.

Effect on rights: I have no right to make requests of other people.

Effect on assertive behavior: I will not ask my girlfriend to reciprocate babysitting favors. I will not ask for a pay increase from my employer.

Healthy message: It is undesirable to incessantly make demands on others. You have a right to ask other people to change their behavior if their behavior affects your life in a concrete way. A request is not the same as a demand. However, if your rights are being violated and your requests for a change are being ignored, you have a right to make demands.

Socialization message: Be sensitive to other people's feelings. Don't hurt other people.

Effect on rights: I have no right to do anything which might hurt someone else's feelings or deflate someone else's ego.

Effect on assertive behavior: I will not say what I really think or feel, because that might hurt someone else. I will inhibit my spontaneity so that I don't impulsively say something that would accidentally hurt someone else.

Healthy message: It is undesirable to deliberately try to hurt others. However, it is impossible as well as undesirable to try to govern your life so as *never* to hurt *anyone*. You have a right to express your thoughts and feelings even if someone else's feelings occasionally get hurt. To do otherwise would result in your being phoney and in denying other people an opportunity to learn how to handle their own feelings. Remember that some people get hurt because they're unreasonably sensitive and others use their hurt to manipulate you. If you accidentally hurt someone else, you can generally repair the damage.

My Rights as a Person

1. To be the ultimate judge of myself—to set my own priorities.
2. To be illogical—not to offer reasons for my behavior.
3. To express my feelings and opinions openly and directly (even if you don't like them) and to have their importance acknowledged.
4. To be angry and say so.
5. To say "no" without feeling guilty.
6. To ask for what I want.
7. To get what I pay for.
8. To ask for information from professionals.
9. To be independent of the goodwill of others before coping with them.
10. To make mistakes.
11. To set limits on my relationships.
12. To judge where I am responsible for finding the solution to someone else's problem.
13. To choose whether or not to change a behavior someone else objects to.
14. To choose not to assert myself.

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

Guidelines to Feelings

1. Feelings are Facts—in and of themselves they are not good or bad, they just *are*. Whatever feelings we have are O.K.

2. Feelings don't always go away when they are ignored or denied expression.

3. Many feelings occur without our being able to start or stop them; that is, as feelings they are not under our control.

4. The *expression* of feelings is often under our control and can be varied according to what is desirable, good, proper, allowed, etc.

5. *Expressions* of feeling can be evaluated as good or bad, desirable or undesirable.

6. People have varying ability to control and channel the expression of feelings—depending on such things as age, prior learning experience, and the amount of stress they are under.

7. Feelings can affect our ability to think clearly—especially when they are unexpressed.

8. Expressing feelings in some way usually does help us feel better. Sometimes simply "ventilating" feelings helps or it may make problem solving possible.

9. Feelings can be expressed in many ways:

   Directly: "I'm really feeling angry at you."

   Indirectly: "This is a rotten day, nothing is going right."

   As accusation: "What's wrong with you? What a stupid thing to do."

   By indirect behavior: Hitting a punching bag when frustrated.

10. Feelings can be used, even "put on" to get some payoff, i.e. a temper tantrum.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

11. Feelings and their expression come in interrelated clusters such as:

    frustration—anger—striking out
    anger—guilt—depression
    happy—excited—energetic activity
    infant-omnipotence—anger—tantrumming
    insecurity/fear—anxiety—loss of efficiency
    insecurity—anger—striking out

12. A person is still good and loved even when we may strongly disapprove of the way some feeling is expressed.

13. People feel accepted if they feel they have been understood.

The Confidence Game

It takes confidence to move ahead at work—but gaining more confidence is not as hard as you think. If you play the game, you might actually talk yourself into giving your ego a lift. Try these ten tips and surprise yourself with growing assurance.

1. **Build yourself up.** Everyone has a positive side. Instead of worrying about what you can't do, think about your strengths. Make a list of your good points—all of them. Keep reminding yourself of the things you do well, the skills you have with people or machines or plants, your tennis game, your artistic side, or your organizational ability. Talk yourself up—not down.

2. **Talk positively about yourself.** Modesty is all well and good, but if you keep saying "I'm clumsy," "I'm fat," or "I'm not good enough," you will begin to believe it—and so will others. Advertise your strengths.

3. **Build positive expectations.** When you constantly apologize, you only sabotage yourself and raise doubts about your work. Don't hand in a project saying, "I know this could be better" or "I'm sorry this was not done sooner." Instead, build positive expectations by saying, "Here's the report. I've given it my best."

4. **Say "I can."** Just because you have never been good at math or writing or speaking to a group does not mean you can't learn. Adults, because they are more motivated, are often better at learning than when they were children. Give yourself a chance and you may be surprised at your potential.

5. **Sound convincing.** Watch for conversational phrases like "I guess," "maybe," "I suppose," or "I may be wrong, but . . ." Don't preface statements with "Don't you think?" or make your statements sound like questions. If you don't sound convinced of what you are saying, how can anyone else be?

6. **Set goals.** Think about where you would like to be in a year or in five years. Then write down the steps you must take to get there, and begin—one step at a time.

7. **Take action toward goals.** Everyone is busy and it is easy to find excuses to put off signing up for a course or talking to your boss about ways to advance. Making a move, however small, toward your goal is the only

Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

way to get where you want to go. Energy generates more energy. Get moving!

8. **Play the part.** Look at the way successful people dress and behave, and do the same yourself. Look people in the eye, shake hands firmly, speak distinctly, and dress well. No one can see inside to know if you are quaking. When you behave more confidently, you fool even yourself. Before you know it, you really will feel more confident.

9. **Volunteer.** When you have the chance to take on new responsibilities, don't say "I'm not sure I can handle it." Try "I'm excited at the challenge" instead.

10. **Dream.** Fantasies are not a waste of time. Picture yourself the way you want to be, think about performing well and succeeding on the job. It can be a rehearsal for reality.

The Confidence Game

1. Build yourself up.
2. Talk positively about yourself.
3. Build positive expectations.
4. Say "I can."
5. Sound convincing.
6. Set goals.
7. Take action toward goals.
8. Play the part.
9. Volunteer.
10. Dream.

Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

The Positive Approach

1. Take responsibility for your own life. Forget the cop-out of blaming your problems on your family or someone else. Only you can turn your life around.

2. Don't allow others to make you feel powerless. Refuse to accept the viewpoint that you are limited. You don't need everyone's approval to do something that is right for you.

3. Find a purpose in life. It can be rearing children, or doing your best in business or in whatever suits you. When the going gets rough, keeps your sights on your purpose.

4. No matter what, make your relationship with your children work. It it's not working, ask yourself what you can do to make it work.

5. Exchange "I can't" for "I can" in your vocabulary. Seek your family's support. Ask them to help you say "I can do it."

6. Accept yourself as you are right now even though you may not like some things about yourself. After accepting yourself, plan to change what you dislike.

7. Create small, medium, and large goals. Every so often, check to see how you are meeting those goals. If you haven't met them, decide why.

8. Write down your new, positive beliefs about yourself and put them where you can see them. Repeat them to yourself as often as possible. You will soon begin to feel changes in the way you feel about yourself.

9. Step back and assess yourself regularly. A self-evaluation in the evening will help make the next day better.

10. Begin to see yourself as powerful, successful, and capable of reaching your goals. Picturing yourself reaching your goals will help you replace the old "I can't" image of yourself.

11. Be open to a possibility even if you've never done it and can't imagine how it could be done. Try a new plan even if it runs the risk of failure.

12. Work with a creative idea, plan, or project. Accept other ideas even though you didn't think of them, you won't get the credit, you won't personally benefit from them, or you may not live to see and enjoy them.

13. When you think you've reached the end of the rope, **tie a knot and hang on!!!**

Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

The Positive Approach

1. Take responsibility for your own life.
2. Don't allow others to make you feel powerless.
3. Find a purpose in life.
4. Make your relationship with your children work.
5. Exchange "I can't" for "I can" in your vocabulary.
6. Accept yourself as you are right now.
7. Create small, medium, and large goals.
8. Write down your new, positive beliefs about yourself.
9. Step back and assess yourself regularly.
10. See yourself as powerful, successful, and capable.
11. Be open to a possibility.
12. Work with a creative idea, plan, or project.

Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide,* 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

Success Skills Curriculum

Introduction

Single parents and displaced homemakers often need help planning for a career that will provide them with sufficient income to care for their families. Before getting to the stage of career planning, however, some single parents and displaced homemakers need to develop certain life skills.

This *Success Skills Curriculum for Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers* develops such skills as taking responsibility for self; communicating effectively; balancing family, school, and self; and skills to enhance effectiveness.

Audience

This curriculum guide is designed to meet the unique needs of single parents and displaced homemakers who require additional skill building before entering the job market or a job training program.

Curriculum Length

The *Success Skills Curriculum* is a 36-hour program of instruction. However, instructors can pull out individual units, competencies ar activities and handouts to use independently.

Curriculum Competencies and Indicators and Time Allotments

A list of competencies and indicators and the time allocated for each follows.

UNIT 1: TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF—9 Hours

1.0 Assessment of self-esteem

1.01 Define self-esteem
1.02 Assess one's self-esteem
1.03 Describe one's self-image
1.04 Evaluate attitudes, myths, stereotypes and childhood messages
1.05 Identify leadership skills to improve self-esteem

2.0 Assessment of self-talk

2.01 Define self-talk
2.02 Identify examples of irrational and rational self-talk
2.03 Demonstrate appropriate self-talk

3.0 Skills to make transitions

3.01 Describe the phases of the transitional process
3.02 Identify barriers to effective transitioning
3.03 Develop a personal strategy for transition

4.0 Skills to maintain wellness

4.01 Describe physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual health
4.02 Assess one's state of health
4.03 Identify strategies to maintain health

5.0 Understanding one's legal rights

5.01 Identify legal rights
5.02 Describe the avenues to self-empowerment

Success Skills Curriculum
for Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers

Success Skills was initiated by Fran Johnson, Sex Equity Consultant, Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education (WBVTAE) and supported through the Single Parent set-aside of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, P. L. 98-524.

Special appreciation goes to the Advisory Committee for this curriculum. This group developed the outline and stayed involved throughout the process of compiling this resource. Advisory Committee members include:

Barbara Dougherty, Vocational Studies Center
Lianne Grefsheim, Vocational Studies Center
Karen Isebrands, Nicolet VTAE
Fran Johnson, WBVTAE
Dorothy Kramlich, Fox Valley Technical College
Miki Martin-Erschnig, Waukesha County Technical College
Katherine McNellis, Lakeshore Technical College
Sylvia Nelson, Chippewa Valley Technical College
Molly Sandleback, Western Wisconsin VTAE
Maureen Simon, Lakeshore VTAE
Joan Visintainer, Moraine Park Technical College

In addition to the Advisory Committee, many other people participated in this project by reviewing and commenting on an early draft and suggesting materials for inclusion. Many thanks to the following people (and any whose names have been omitted inadvertently) for their work and insights:

Denise Aigner, Lakeshore Technical College
Elaine Bloyer, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Nan Brennan, Chippewa Valley Technical College
Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College
Judith Erickson, Western Wisconsin Technical College
Mary Fortier, Nicolet Area Technical College
Gloria Gonzales, Milwaukee Area Technical College
Jean Holzer, Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Esta Lewin, Gateway Technical College
Deb McDonald, Mid-State Technical College
Carolyn Michalski, Northcentral Technical College
Debbra Reichert, Madison Area Technical College
Libby Sellars, Waukesha County Technical College
Karen Showers, Blackhawk Technical College
Judy Stanton, Lakeshore Technical College
Carol Wilmot, Lakeshore Technical College

It has been our intention to receive written permission prior to reprinting materials and to give proper attribution for all materials used in this curriculum. Some materials, however, have been circulating without attribution for years, and we were unable to track down—or even identify—the original author(s). Please contact us with any corrections and we will make the appropriate changes in the next edition of the curriculum.

Distribution limited to Wisconsin Technical Colleges

Copyright ©1991 by Vocational Studies Center
School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The University of Wisconsin-Madison does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, creed, religion, sexual orientation, color, marital status, disability, national origin or ancestry.

UNIT 2: COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY—9 hours

6.0 Skills to effective verbal communication

- 6.01 Identify different types of communication styles
- 6.02 Assess assertiveness
- 6.03 Demonstrate communication styles
- 6.04 Recognize the effect of non-verbal communication to enhance/inhibit the communication process
- 6.05 Identify the roles of people in a group

7.0 Skills to effective listening

- 7.01 Identify listening skills
- 7.02 Identify barriers to listening
- 7.03 Demonstrate effective listening skills

8.0 Demonstrate skills to maintain effective behavior

- 8.01 Demonstrate skills to effectively express ideas and emotions, especially during conflict
- 8.02 Identify barriers to effective communication
- 8.03 Demonstrate effective techniques to get what one believes in

UNIT 3: BALANCING FAMILY, SCHOOL, AND SELF—9 hours

9.0 Skills to manage stress

9.01 Define stress/stressors
9.02 Identify causes of stress
9.03 Identify personal responses to stress
9.04 Identify positive ways to manage stress

10.0 Skills to manage time

10.01 Identify the importance of practicing time management
10.02 Identify personal barriers to time management
10.03 Identify time wasting/procrastinating behavior
10.04 Develop organizational skills
10.05 Identify positive time management techniques to balance family, school and self
10.06 Identify community resources

11.0 Skills for making ends meet financially

11.01 Assess financial attitude
11.02 Define financial management
11.03 Identify personal financial assets and liabilities
11.04 Develop a personal financial plan
11.05 Identify community resources for financial management

12.0 Skills to develop a personal support system

12.01 Define support system
12.02 Identify personal areas in need of support
12.03 Identify community resources for support systems
12.04 Demonstrate skills to develop a personal support system

13.0 Skills to nurture other family members and friends

13.01 Describe nurturing
13.02 Identify personal positive and negative aspects of own nurturance
13.03 Demonstrate positive nurturing skills
13.04 Identify community resources for nurturing family members and friends

UNIT 4: SKILLS TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS—9 hours

14.0 Skills to develop self-motivation

14.01 Identify appropriate motivational models
14.02 Develop a personal motivational plan
14.03 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's personal motivational plan
14.04 Identify resources to help deal with roadblocks

15.0 Skills to make appropriate and realistic decisions

15.01 Identify problem-solving models
15.02 Apply critical thinking to personal problem solving
15.03 Identify decision-making models
15.04 Develop an individual decision-making/problem-solving action plan
15.05 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's plan
15.06 Identify resources and strategies to overcome roadblocks and achieve one's plan

16.0 Skills to access role models/mentors

16.01 Define mentoring
16.02 Identify the benefits of a mentoring relationship
16.03 Identify potential mentors
16.04 Demonstrate confidence in asking for support, information and assistance

17.0 Attaining/enhancing basic academic skills

17.01 Identify common barriers to academic success
17.02 Demonstrate skills in overcoming barriers
17.03 Identify technical skill deficiencies
17.04 Demonstrate skills in overcoming technical skill deficiencies
17.05 Identify potential barriers to success in a nontraditional occupation
17.06 Assess study skill deficiencies
17.07 Identify and access resources for continuous study skills improvement

18.0 Understanding differences in the workforce

18.01 Develop an awareness of differences in cultures
18.02 Identify changing workforce and personal impact upon the workforce
18.03 Develop empathy in working with people from different cultures
18.04 Identify benefits of working with other cultures

Curriculum Components

Each indicator includes the following components which will be discussed below in more detail: Overview, Additional Resources, Instructor Notes, Activity, and Handout.

Overview

At the beginning of each competency is a general overview of the content. There also is a detailed overview that lists the intent of each indicator, content, instructional strategies, and instructional resources.

The *content section* highlights the content of a particular instructional strategy or instructional resource.

The *instructional strategies section* lists the format suggested to teach the specific content. The strategies could include: instructor notes, instructor resource, handout, activity, roleplay, panel, speaker(s), discussion, etc. These will be discussed in more detail below.

The *instructional resource section* lists the title of the instructor notes, instructor resource, activity, handout, or section of a workbook. In some indicators, there are more instructional resources than can be used in the time given. Instructors can choose the materials that will work best for their group.

Instructor Resources

A list of additional resources have been included as further background information or reference material for the instructor. This list follows the Overview for each competency. These may be given to the participants if the instructor feels the information is relevant.

Instructor Notes

This component will provide the instructor with background information on a particular topic. This information can be used as the basis for a lecture or discussion. The text is written in the right-hand column thus allowing the instructor to jot notes for future reference in the left-hand column. Sometimes highlights of this information also is presented in the form of overheads to accompany the lecture.

Handouts

Some information is presented to participants on handouts. Discussions may be centered around this information.

Activity Sheets

In order to provide the participants with practical experience with the subject material, a variety of classroom activities have been included in the curriculum guide. There are several things you can do as an instructor to get the most out of these activities.

Introduce the activity in this order:

1. Describe the activity briefly.
2. Explain how the activity relates to the indicator for a particular competency.
3. Give the time limits.
4. Give instructions clearly.
5. Hand out the instructional materials only after you have given the instructions.
6. Pause for questions about the instructions.
7. Tell participants when to start.
8. Do not interrupt once the activity has begun.

Monitor the activity:

1. Circulate in the classroom to gauge how the participants are progressing.
2. Answer questions individually.
3. Announce the time remaining near the end of the activity.
4. If extra time is an option, ask, "Who needs more time?" Refrain from asking, "Is everyone finished?"

Debrief the activity with the entire group:

1. With participant contributions, summarize the learning points from the activity.
2. Relate these points to the original objective for the activity.
3. Discuss issues that need more clarification.
4. Provide a linking statement for a smooth transition into the next topic or activity.

Classroom Discussions

Discussions can be a useful tool for encouraging active involvement throughout the course. Some strategies for handling discussions are:

Introduce the discussion by setting the scene and stating the objectives:

- What is the purpose of the discussion?
- Why is it important for them?
- What will they get out it?

Start the discussion in one of the following ways:

- Describe a situation and ask participants how they would handle it.
- Set up a hypothetical situation and give the group a choice of action, neither of which is acceptable. A reasonable third alternative will result while debating the pros and cons of each.
- Ask a question directed at the entire group to kick off the discussion without threatening anyone in particular.

Maintain the discussion once it gets started:

- Guide, don't dominate, the group. Avoid talking too much or interrupting participants when they are talking. Questions asked of you by other participants should be redirected whenever possible.

- Wait before giving participants the correct answer; allow time for them to think. More effective learning will take place this way than if you provide them with the answers.

- Be flexible when participants get off the track, but if they get too far for too long bring them back to the topic through normal conversation.

- Avoid making judgmental statements about participants or their viewpoint.

- Use a variety of questions to keep the discussion going, provide participants feedback, and encourage those not participating to join the discussion.

Summarize the discussion:

It is important to summarize a discussion to review and to reinforce the important learning points. Some summarizing techniques are:

- Keep the summary short.
- Relate the most important learning points back to the purpose.
- If additional points need to be made, do this before the summary. Note that this is a summary of what *was* said, not what you *wish* was said.
- If you expect participants to summarize, let them know at the beginning so they have an adequate opportunity to do it well.

Referenced Material

Workbooks that have been referenced throughout the curriculum are listed below. These are excellent resources that instructors may want to purchase.

Balancing Work and Family
Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute, 3554 White Bear Ave, White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110.

Career Smart: Curriculum Guide For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions, Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, 3554 White Bear Ave., White Bear Lake, MN 55110.

Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide
Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education, 65 South Front Street, Columbus, OH 43266-0308.

Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs
Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Project Discover: Handbook and Curriculum Guide
Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Coon Rapids Campus, 11200 Mississippi Blvd., Coon Rapids, MN 55433-3470.

Reentry Women Project Curriculum
Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, 235 North National Avenue, P.O. Box 1940, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54936-1940.

Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report
Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Capital Tower Plaza, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers
Vocational and Technical Education, Department of Education, P.O. Box 30009, Lansing, MI 48909.

Unit 1
Taking Responsibility for Self

Note to Instructors: Plan on spending nine classroom hours on "Unit 1: Taking Responsibility for Self." The nine hours can be divided in any way that best meets the needs of your group. If you choose to divide the time evenly among the five Competencies, then spend roughly 1 hour and 45 minutes on each Competency.

Unit 1 includes:

1.0 Assessment of Self-Esteem
2.0 Assessment of Self-Talk
3.0 Skills to Make Transitions
4.0 Skills to Maintain Wellness
5.0 Understanding One's Legal Rights

Competency 2.0

Assessment of self-talk

2.01 Define self-talk.
2.02 Identify examples of irrational and rational self-talk.
2.03 Demonstrate appropriate self-talk.

Competency 2.0
Overview

"Self-talk" is the constant talk that goes on in our heads. In each of us, a never-ending stream of self-talk critiques and comments on all our thoughts and actions. Much of this self-talk is made up of messages from childhood; we may hear the voices of our parents in our heads, repeating over and over again to us their beliefs and expectations. This ongoing self-talk affects the way we feel about ourselves and the way we view our place in the world.

The messages that get replayed in our minds, however, are not always accurate, rational, or helpful to us. Our self-talk may include lessons from childhood that are no longer relevant in our lives, or opinions that at some point in the past we simply accepted without ever questioning their validity or rationality. This sort of negative self-talk can have a profound effect on the way we lead our daily lives.

It is possible to change our self-talk, though, and replace old, negative messages with new, positive ones. This can be done through techniques such as affirmation, a method for developing healthy, productive messages. It is also possible to learn to recognize and counteract our negative self-talk in everyday situations.

This competency addresses the importance of self-talk and provides methods for participants to re-evaluate, counteract, and change their personal self-talk. Participants completing Competency 2.0: Assessment of Self-Talk will be able to:

2.01 Define self-talk
2.02 Identify examples of irrational and rational self-talk
2.03 Demonstrate appropriate self-talk

Indicator 2.01 offers a definition of self-talk and provides an overview of methods for conquering our negative self-talk. Following this, Indicator 2.02 provides activities that help participants identify their own self-talk and distinguish between rational and irrational messages. In the final section, Indicator 2.03, participants are offered several methods for developing positive, beneficial self-talk messages.

Competency 2.0: Assessment of Self-Talk

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
2.01 Define self-talk	Lecture; discussion	*Self-Talk (note accompanying overhead)*
2.02 Identify examples of irrational and rational self-talk	Activity	*Counteracting Irrational Thoughts*
	Activity	*Talk to Yourself Exercise*
2.03 Demonstrate appropriate self-talk	Discussion	*Guidelines for Using Affirmations; Guidelines for Affirmations; Additional Sample Affirmations*
	Activity	*Using Affirmations*
	Activity	*Developing a Winning Attitude*
	Activity	*Talking With Oneself/The Mind Is Its Own Place*

Resources

Butler, Pamela E. (1983). Talking to yourself: Learning the language of self-support. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Martorano, Joseph T. (1989). Beyond negative thinking: Breaking the cycle of depressing and anxious thoughts. New York: Insight Books.

Schenkel, Susan. (1991). Giving away success: Why women get stuck and what to do about it. New York: Random House.

Stoop, David. (1981). Self talk. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, Co.

Self Talk

Contrary to what we may have believed as children many of the standards we learned were *opinions* and not facts or laws about how things "should" be done. (Hair can look nice without 100 brush strokes per night; the cars won't fall apart if they're not washed once a week; laundry doesn't have to be completed on Monday; children's toys don't have to be reorganized every night; babies don't become diseased or covered with rash if they don't get a bath every night . . .) One way to do a *reality check* on a standard is to ask yourself what would happen if I didn't . . . ? How realistic are the imagined consequences? (Often we feel as if we believe the sky will fall on us; usually it doesn't.) A second way is to experiment. Try lowering or changing your standard on something and take note of the consequences. Did anyone else notice? How do you feel—guilty, fearful, free? Did anything else change?

Another question to consider is: What are you hoping to gain by changing your standards? More time for yourself, your spouse, your children, other activities? More energy for other things you want to do? More time or energy for things you feel you must do?

Often we are more willing to adjust our standards to allow more time and energy for other people or other tasks but not for *ourselves*. It is sometimes harder to justify a change (to ourselves or others) when we want that extra time to relax, to read, to take a walk, jog, do an exercise routine, write letters or whatever we may not be finding time for right now.

Studies have shown that often men seem to find it easier to make time for personal needs than women, perhaps because martyr-like (self-sacrificing) behavior is reinforced in girls much more than in boys! As one author on work-family issues aptly put it: "there is no future in martyrdom."

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family*, 1985, by permission of the Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute.

"Self talk" is all the talk that goes on in our heads. When we are awake and not talking aloud or listening intently, we are almost constantly "talking to ourselves." It is as if we have been collecting "tapes" in our mind since birth that play, sometimes repeatedly. When we add a new bit of information, it goes on the tape *without* evaluation. Later as we *evaluate* a piece of information we can change it. If we don't evaluate and change it, it keeps playing the way it was originally taken in. Some of what we put on tape has either become obsolete or was never very good for us in the first place. Sometimes as children we misinterpreted things we heard from our parents and others around us but the tape was made anyway. As we talk to ourselves, what we say affects how we *feel*—angry, confident, relaxed, upset, insecure, etc.

One of our tasks as mature adults is to question some of those tapes and change some of them, even though there are strong impulses not to (everything mother or father told us was absolutely correct, wasn't it?). Secondly, we can make new tapes. Our standards and expectations, along with everything else we think and believe, are on those tapes.

Those of us who grew up in the traditional mother-homemaker, father-breadwinner home have many tapes (which play in our minds regularly) that are not very compatible with the work-family lifestyle. This incompatibility is a source of guilt and disappointment for some. (One woman, a mother of two school age children, struggled with the thought of going back to work. One of her "tapes" that played over and over was a favorite poem of her mother's about the children coming home from school to hear mother's voice and the smell of warm cookies fresh out of the oven. One man, the father of three and home-partner with his working wife, looked at his workshop and shook his head in sadness—his vision (tapes can be visual or memories of feelings as well as being words) was his favorite uncle's beautifully organized basement, with every tool in place, sawdust always swept away at the end of each working period, and an empty work table waiting for the next project.)

Four Techniques for Changing Our Self Talk

One way to make a change in our self talk is to become aware of how what we are saying makes us feel and to learn to be more **nurturing** to ourselves. When we think about an event at home or work and make an appraisal (our judgment–based on our standards) of how it went, we may say "that went well" or "you really did a good job there" and as a result our confidence is bolstered, we feel relaxed, content or perhaps excited and enthused about one of our work or home-related roles. If we instead say, "you dummy, why did you say that?" "you blew it!" or "I'll never be a good parent," our confidence is weakened and we feel tense, angry or depressed. In a way, much of what we say is as if we were parenting *ourselves*. In fact, a lot of our self talk habits were developed in childhood as we put on tape what our parents (and other adults) said to us and each other.

Nurturing self talk by itself doesn't solve problems. The purpose of using a more nurturing self talk is to keep us from upsetting ourselves so that our anger is up and/or our confidence is down. It's hard to be a good communicator or problem solver when we're in that kind of state.

A second way of changing our self talk is to do a **reality check** on what we're saying and attempt to bring what we say more in line with the reality of today's situation. Albert Ellis, a noted psychologist, focused his work on helping people address some basic irrational beliefs (expectations) that people often have. These beliefs are closely related to our standard setting and expectations. Three of the most basic are the following:

1. "I must be loved or approved by practically every significant person in my life—and if I'm not, it's awful."

2. "I must not make mistakes or errors or do poorly, and if I do, it's terrible."

3. "People and events should always be the way I want them to be."

These beliefs or expectations are bound to make us feel disturbed. As we compare situations and events to these *irrational* standards, we will seldom, if ever, feel successful. Ellis suggests that the following are more in line with reality:

1. "It's definitely nice to have people's love and approval, but even without it, I can still accept and enjoy *myself*."

2. "Doing well is satisfying—but it's human to make mistakes."

3. "People are going to act the way *they* want—not the way I want."

These expectations are probably universally true. We also experience many events where the times or our circumstances have changed. We're not likely to be bothered if great grandma says "to really get clothes clean, you've got to use a scrub board." We know such a standard is out of step with today's reality. But there are a lot of things that are just as "out of step" with the lifestyle (today's reality) we have chosen (or at least are experiencing today) that can cause us to feel upset. In these cases we need to be aware of our values, priorities and the nature of the lifestyle we've chosen and be prepared to "reprogram" some of the tapes that are nonproductive.

The standards and expectations we have on tape are often irrational because they don't fit at the *moment* but may fit generally with our present lifestyle. In such cases, we need to recognize that "lack of fit" with the present moment without giving up our general value or expectation.

A third strategy involves *rephrasing* our self talk to acknowledge our standard or expectation, and to follow that with a second, new standard that fits better for right now. This is particularly useful when the standard or expectation is too strong to change and we're not willing to judge it irrational or out of date. We can use the **"I'd rather" statement.** This is also useful when we are recognizing that we can't control the beliefs of others.

This doesn't get us out of what we wish were different, but it helps to diffuse the feelings of frustration and resulting energy drain that occurs when we tell ourselves upsetting things. We are in control of our own thoughts.

A fourth strategy is learning to **change channels.** Psychologists have taught us that it can be harmful to "stuff" our feelings deep inside and not deal with them. But sometimes it is helpful to set them aside and to look at them at a later (perhaps more appropriate) time. This is a particularly helpful technique for transitioning between home and work. If we are on the way to work and thoughts of family member's problems, household work that needs to be done, etc. are filling our mind, it is possible to visualize these tapes we are playing as being on different channels—like a TV we can visualize changing the channel—in this case perhaps to thinking about work or a "relaxation station," knowing that at a better time we can turn back to the "family station." Is this avoidance? Based on the second strategy of dealing with irrational beliefs, perhaps another irrational expectation is that we should be able to deal with everything at once!

Referring back to changing channels, the channel changing technique may be helpful if we are feeling "plagued" with thoughts that compare how we're doing with how we think we *should* be doing and can't shake the "guilties" or the frustrations we're feeling as a result. Using some nurturing self talk, we can say, "This is really frustrating to think about and is interfering with (job, or sex, or time with child, etc.). I'm going to switch it off and deal with it later." (Incidentally, Masters and Johnson, experts on human sexuality, list *fatigue* and *preoccupation* as the two key factors that interfere with a satisfying sexual relationship.) Learning to stay focused in on what we're doing makes us more productive (at home or work) and is likely to allow us to feel good about what we've done, so we're better able to cope with whatever was on that channel that we switched off earlier!

Also, when we choose to turn back, we often have a new perspective on the matter. Frustrations that piled up may have melted away making it easier to pick out what's most important to deal with in the present.

If we have developed a habit of "ruminating"–going over a "negative tape" over and over without resolution–it may require switching away from that channel over and over and being firm that it is going to stay off for now.

Can any of these techniques "backfire?" That is, could they lead to non-productive results if not used as intended? Yes, most things can be if not used in the positive, confidence-building, nurturing way they were intended. For example, if one spouse has an issue he/she wants to discuss, and the other doesn't, any of these techniques could be used to rationalize avoidance. Any new technique must be evaluated after we've tried it and if relationships are being damaged as a result, obviously, some adjustment is in order.

Affirmations: Making New Tapes for Personal Development

In the broadest sense, an affirmation is any positive statement we say to ourselves that contributes to our well-being. Thus, many of the examples in the nurturing self talk, reality check and "I'd rather" techniques were affirmations.

We can also make brand new tapes. Much of how we perform and how we feel is in reaction to those tapes we choose to (yes, *choose* to) play. If we're trying something new and tell ourselves "I can't do this" over and over, it is likely we will be right (and there is some joy in being right). Just as in the children's story of the Little Red Caboose who said "I think I can"—so we can have a better chance of mastering the task with positive self talk. Positive attitude is a key component to most success. Not only does it have an effect on its own, it also allows our mind to be free to learn what else we need to learn to do well or feel well. Many amazing links are being discovered between mind and body.

Affirmations can deal with *any* area we choose to change in our lives—physical, social, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual.

Techniques for Changing Self-Talk

- Nurture yourself
- Reality check
- "I'd rather" statement
- Change channels

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family*, 1985, by permission of the Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute.

Counteracting Irrational Thoughts

Purpose: To develop a technique for coping with irrational thoughts.

The best way to prepare yourself for a situation which is threatening is to list on paper the "self-talk" which creates your feelings of anxiety or anger. The next step is to challenge or counteract each statement.

Procedure: Think of a situation you will be facing in the near future in which you would like to act assertively but you feel handicapped by either anxiety or anger.

1. Write a brief description of the situation and your feelings:

   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____

2. In the column on the left, list the thoughts that pass quickly through your mind which cause you to become anxious or angry when you think about acting assertively during your situation. Next, think about what makes that thought so awful and write that down in the same column.

   For example:
   1. If I tell John I don't want to date him, I will hurt his feelings.
   2. He will feel terribly, terribly hurt.
   3. It will be all my fault.

Self-talk that produces negative feelings	**Counteracting statements**
1. ______________	1. ______________
2. ______________	2. ______________
3. ______________	3. ______________
4. ______________	4. ______________
5. ______________	5. ______________

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

3. Now go back and challenge each item of self-talk. Write your challenges in the right column above. To challenge each statement, look at it logically and rationally. Besides your self-talk, there are at least three other ways to look at the same statement:

   a. There is just as much chance the opposite will happen.

   b. It may affect some people one way, an equal number the other way.

   c. If it did happen, does it matter? Can you handle it? Can the other people involved handle it?

      In addition, do you have alternative ways of responding to the same situation? Does it really mean you are no good, unlovable, stupid, will always be alone, etc.?

   d. Also, consider your Human Rights.

   e. Write your challenges in the form of a different kind of self-talk that you could use instead of the negative self-talk expressed in the first column.

Talk to Yourself Exercise

I. Choose one of these situations:

1. You get a low grade on your first math test.
2. A friend compliments you on your outfit.
3. You realize that you left your purse somewhere.
4. A friend recommends that you try a weight loss/exercise/smoking cessation program.
5. You hear about a high-paying job in your field.

II. List what you would say or think to yourself.

III. Now identify how you would react to a friend who found herself in the same situation.

IV. Compare your answers to II and III, and consider these questions:

- Was your "self-talk" and "other talk" the same? What were the similarities and differences?

- Which was easier to identify . . . what you tend to say to yourself or to others?

- Is your self-talk healthy and positive, or are you too hard on yourself or too narrow in your thinking?

- What are some of the ways that negative self messages affect you?

Reprinted by permission of Barbara Read, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Guidelines for Using Affirmations

You can only affirm yourself. In writing affirmations, **you are changing your self-image.** Only you can deliberately control the input of information and visualization that comes into your subconscious.

Affirmations use positive sentence structure. Do not describe what you want to move away from or eliminate. Instead, paint the picture of the change you want to happen. For example, do not make an affirmation like "I'm no longer a failure;" put it into positive statements like "I am successful."

Write affirmations in the present tense. (I am, I can, I have, etc.) The only time frame that the subconscious operates on is present tense, here and now. Statements like "some day," "in the future" detach yourself from the change you want to experience **now**. The subconscious must receive a picture of you as though you are looking out of your own eyes at what you are achieving, and your emotional response to that change.

Use "I am" and "I have," as well as ability, "I can" statements to express clearly the picture you desire. The more you subconsciously act as if you are already in possession of that quality or change, the faster your self-image will make it evident in your daily actions.

Make no comparisons. Writing affirmations is a personal process that has nothing to do with anyone around you. You are unique, and comparing your growth to others around you provides little value in measuring personal growth. Strive to bring about some changes in your self-image that you want by affirming the qualities that are best for you.

Use action words to describe the activity you are affirming. Use words like "I enjoy," "I like to," "I can easily." Put some excitement into your affirmations to spark an emotional picture in your subconscious and make the experience more believable and attractive.

Be accurate and balanced. Affirm only as high as you can honestly imagine yourself becoming or performing. Do not overshoot or undershoot. Try to visualize the end result so vividly that you can stay on course to your goal.

Refrain from affirming perfection! It is ridiculous and self-defeating to make assumptions about yourself or your accomplishments that you know have very little chance of ever happening or lasting. Avoid terms like "I always," "Every time I will" or "I'll never."

Without really meaning to hold you back, some people around you may get upset when you start changing and growing. They are used to old habits. Use good judgment, and only reveal your affirmations to those persons who need to know them and who will support you in realizing them more quickly.

Reprinted by permission of Carol Rikke, Customized Training Services, Granite Falls, Minnesota.

Guidelines for Affirmations

- Speak in the first person by using "I" statements.

  For example: "I am ...," "I have ...," "I can ...."

- Use present tense to discuss what you are capable of right now.

  For example: "I know I can do this."

- Use words that trigger emotions.

  For example: "I am excited because ...," "I am delighted that I can ...."

- Avoid comparing yourself to others. Affirming is a technique for individual and personal self-appreciation.

  For example: "X is a much better .... than I am."

- Repetition is essential. Placing affirmation statements on your folder, your bathroom mirror, refrigerator door, etc. will help you to visualize yourself as a strong, competent person.

Reprinted with permission of Donna Boben, St. Paul Technical College, White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

Additional Sample Affirmations

- I am highly motivated to reach my career goal.
- I finish everything I want to finish.
- I love myself; I am gentle and patient with myself.
- I can do it.
- I am able to express myself clearly, honestly, and directly.
- I am able to deal with my emotions openly, honestly, and appropriately.
- I am a warm and caring person.
- I am strong and resourceful.
- I am healthy, wise, loving of myself and others.
- I have the energy, courage, and resources to make those changes I need to make.
- I respond only to positive suggestions.

Reprinted with permission of Donna Boben, St. Paul Technical College, White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

Using Affirmations

An affirmation is a positive thought that you consciously choose to immerse in your consciousness to produce a desired result. In other words, what you do is give your mind an idea or purpose. By repetition you can feed your mind positive thoughts and achieve your desired goal.

Write each affirmation ten or twenty times on a sheet of paper, leaving a space on the right-hand margin for responses. As the affirmation is written on the left side of the page, you also jot down whatever thoughts, considerations, beliefs, fears, or emotions that may come into your mind on the right side of the page. Keep repeating the affirmation and observe how the responses on the right side change. This will give you the opportunity to discover what is standing between you and your goal.

Pick out the affirmations that apply to you and begin working with them. After you have gotten in touch with most of the negative responses your mind has to the affirmation, it is a good idea to stop using the response column and just keep writing the positive, affirming sentence.

1. I, ________________, was born with a limitless capacity for enjoyment and pleasure.
2. I, ________________, have a basic trust that my affirmations will work and my efforts will be rewarded.
3. I, ________________, am highly pleasing to myself.
4. I, ________________, am highly pleasing to myself in the presence of other people.
5. It is more important that I, ________________, please myself than to please men.

   It is more important that I, ________________, please myself than to please women.
6. I, ________________, am no longer dependent on a man's approval for my self-esteem.

   I, ________________, am no longer dependent on a woman's approval for self-esteem.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

7. I, ________________, am learning to love myself more every day.

8. I, ________________, respect my own uniqueness.

9. I, ________________, like myself even if men are not present.

I, ________________, like myself even if women are not present.

10. I, ________________, can trust myself and go at my own speed.

11. I, ________________, am good enough to be loved by ____________.

12. I, ________________, now practice being good to myself.

13. I, ________________, am not a failure. I, ________________, am a total success.

14. I, ________________, now praise and acknowledge myself verbally to myself.

15. I, ________________, now approve of all my actions.

16. I, ________________, now have confidence in my ability.

17. I, ________________, will no longer look for faults in myself to explain other people's actions towards me.

Developing a Winning Attitude

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the response that completes the following statements.

1. One thing I learned about myself today is ______________________________

____

____

2. One thing that encourages change in me is ______________________________

____

____

3. One put-down I said or thought about myself that I would like to reverse is __

____

____

4. In order to become more positive about myself, one thing I plan to do today and this week is ______________________________

____

____

____

Reprinted with permission from The Women's Development Center, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

Talking With Oneself/The Mind Is Its Own Place

Contrary to what you might have heard, talking with yourself can be a very healthy thing to do. In fact, what you tell yourself can help determine whether you become victor or victim in your communications with yourself and other people.

Example: To Ask or To Remain Silent

You are in a vocational-technical education class and don't understand the teacher's explanation. You want to stop the teacher and ask for clarification, but your internal "victim" responses begin. "If I speak up," these responses say:

> My classmates will think I am stupid.
> The teacher might scold me.
> Everybody will laugh at me.
> "They" won't like me.
> The teacher will fail me.
> I'll feel terrible.
> I'll be embarrassed.
> I'll fail this course and won't be able to get a job.

Questions worth asking:

1. What is the reward for remaining silent? ______________________________

____

2. What is the "risk" of speaking out? ______________________________

____

3. What is the worst thing that could possibly happen if I spoke out? ________

____

4. How likely is the "worst" to happen? ______________________________

____

5. Could I handle the worst? ______________________________

____

6. Am I making what I think to be someone else's opinion more important than my own in this situation? If so, why? ______________________________

____

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Competency 3.0

Skills to make transitions

3.01 Describe the phases of the transitional process.
3.02 Identify barriers to effective transitioning.
3.03 Develop a personal strategy for transition.

Competency 3.0
Overview

Living through a time of major life change is a huge challenge. A new child, the loss of a loved one, or re-entering the paid work force all are big changes. People need the skills and the confidence to adapt to change.

One difficult part of life transitions is that of setting new goals. Goals help us focus our thoughts and direct our energy in the way that makes the most sense for us.

This competency is designed to enable participants to understand the process of making a life transition and to develop skills to make those transitions as smooth as possible. Participants completing Competency 3.0: Skills to Make Transitions will be able to:

3.01 Describe the phases of the transitional process
3.02 Identify barriers to effective transitioning
3.03 Develop a personal strategy for transition

Indicator 3.01 provides an overview of typical life changes. Participants take a self-knowledge quiz that helps them think about their abilities to handle change. Indicator 3.02 helps participants think about obstacles to setting new goals for themselves, and offers suggestions to help people through change. In Indicator 3.03, participants write contracts with themselves. These contracts help them clarify their short-term and long-term goals.

Competency 3.0: Skills to Make Transitions

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
3.01	Describe the phases of the transitional process	Discussion	*Typical Life Changes*
		Activity	*Coping with Change Quiz*
3.02	Identify barriers to effective transitioning	Discussion	*Nine Points to Help You in a Change (note accompanying overhead)*
		Activity	*Dealing with Fear*
		Lecture; discussion	*Obstacles to Setting Goals (note accompanying overhead)*
3.03	Develop a personal strategy for transition	Activity	*Goal Setting Contract*

Resources

Bridges, William. (1980). Transitions: Making sense of life's changes. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

Brill, Peter I., M.D. and Hayes, John P. (1981). Taming your turmoil: Managing the transitions of adult life. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Gould, Roger L., M.D. (1978). Transformations: Growth and change in adult life. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc.

Hunt, Margaret, and Munro, Constance. (1982). Life skills for women in transition. Newton, MA: Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center.

Jeffers, Susan. (1987). Feel the fear and do it anyway. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Lasker, Harry, Moore, James, and Simpson, Edwin L. (1980). Adult development and approaches to learning. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Sheehy, Gail. (1974). Passages: Predictable crises of adult life. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc.

Sheehy, Gail. (1981). Pathfinders. New York: Morrow.

Simon, Sidney B. (1989). Getting unstuck: Breaking through your barriers to change. New York: Warner Books.

Vaillant, George. (1978). Adaptation to life. New York: Little, Brown and Co.

Typical Life Changes

Age: 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75

Time since birth
Future stretches forth; time to do and see everything; achievement orientation; death is an abstraction.

Time left to live
Time left to live is limited; life tasks must be completed; only enough time to finish a few important things.

Death is no crisis; how and where are important.

Sense of self-determination
One takes the initiative in coping with life. Social personality is established around career development or family life.

Reexamination of self
One takes stock and plans ahead; normal events are not crises if timing is appropriate.

Sense of life cycle and inevitability
One becomes more contemplative and introspective; preoccupation with inner self.

Women:

Average age at marriage

Last child goes to school

Last child leaves home (a transition but not a crisis); menopause (a physical change but not a crisis); increased freedom and home satisfaction.

Children
First Last

Many women work

Few women work

40 percent of women work

Women care for home and family and play supporting roles outside the home. They tend to be nurturant, concerned with relationships, and conscientious.

55 percent of women work
Women become more dominant, independent and self-confident. Are more accepting of their aggressive impulses.

Men:

Men take the lead in economic, civic and social activities, gaining competence, independence and self-confidence. They become stabilized for the period of middle age.

Men become more nurturant and concerned with relationships, both personal relationships and helping younger people.

Reprinted from A. Chickering and R. Havighurst, *The Modern American College: Responding to the New Realities of Diverse Students and a Changing Society*, 1981, by permission of Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Coping With Change - Quiz

When Robert Maynard Hutchins was President of the University of Chicago, he was once asked, "If you could have your students leave this great institution after four years with but one lesson firmly implanted in their minds, what would it be?"

Without a moment's hesitation, he replied, "I'd teach them to cope with change, which is inevitable."

The inevitability of change can be seen all around us. Our families continually contract and expand, friends come and go, neighborhoods never remain the same, and the job field constantly shifts.

Let's take a look at how we cope with change in our personal lives, and anticipating our work lives.

Instructions: After each question, mark 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 using this scale:

1 = strongly agree
2 = agree
3 = neutral
4 = disagree
5 = strongly disagree

_____ 1. Whenever any major change is proposed, I feel threatened.

_____ 2. In general, I prefer that things continue on the way they are.

_____ 3. I get annoyed when asked to follow a different route to a usual destination.

_____ 4. I would be happiest if my family could stay exactly as it is now (or was six months, one year ago).

_____ 5. Our family routine (vacations, lifestyle) has followed a predictable course—with possibly a single exception—over the last five years.

_____ 6. I would rather continue with the "tried and proven" than experiment with new and different ways of doing things.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

______ 7. My mode of dress has not changed appreciably in the last 10 years.

______ 8. I become anxious whenever other people suggest "office" or "job" change.

______ 9, In my present (or a past) job, I've had ideas for improved work procedures, but I am reluctant to voice them.

______ 10. My biggest concern is whether I can continue in my job until retirement, then be free to do what I want.

Coping With Change - Scoring and Analysis

A total of 44 to 50 means your ability to cope with change in your life is commendable. A score of 37 to 43 is good, but you may want to seek ways to improve your ability to handle change.

A score of 36 or less means coping with change is exacting too high a price in your life. If you're not able to improve your response to change, you might want to consider professional help.

Let's analyze our answers to see what our responses reveal about our ability to cope.

1. Even though it may be fraught with discomfort, the known is almost always preferable to the unknown. At a first hint of a major change we feel a sense of anxiety. If we encounter our negative thought by considering positive thoughts, this may be our first response to major change.

2. Life is constantly evolving, and it is through the use of our intellects that we can direct change and control it rather than letting it control us. Be on the lookout for desirable change affecting your position. Satisfaction can come from being in the vanguard of change rather than sitting among the spectators watching.

3. Raw ego often dictates our paths. However, recognizing our need for interdependence is a sign of strength, not weakness. Others may have better ideas—at least occasionally. Heeding those better ideas gives us an opportunity to learn new things.

4. In what frozen time frame would your family be captured? Mothers who enjoy dependent children might choose the preschool era; some fathers would be attracted to that early pre-adolescence stage when a child's naivete places dad on a pedestal. Our children might choose a late adolescence or young adulthood as an ideal. No family ever stays the same for long, but members can look forward to each stage expectantly if they are determined to improve.

5. Most of us are creatures of habit. If something works once, we try it again. But with vacations which provide an escape from the routine, we can safely experiment. The whole family can be involved in the fun of planning and anticipating it. The same is true for changing household routines, as we go back to work or school.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

6. It's true that you will be less likely to fail if you take no risks. However, it's equally true that you're less likely to truly succeed if you don't reach out and extend yourself. Winners lose more often that do "losers" precisely because winners are willing to take reasonable risks.

   Work advancements result from being unafraid to experiment with the new. Think of how the high speed computer has erased the workload of the past year. How foolish it would have been to resist it. Advancements giving businesses an edge over their competitors never occur unless someone is willing to test new ways.

7. An employment agency had a full-length mirror installed in its waiting room with a sign at the bottom, "Would you hire this person?" Though getting hired may not be an immediate concern, doing business probably is. How do others see you? First impressions count. Is your work wardrobe the best you can afford? Do you feel you keep pace with fashion changes so that people won't peg you as belonging to another era? A little thing—yes, but important for success.

8. For many people, the office competes with the home as a place of primary importance. Those who have had leadership roles in their place of business often feel they have been attacked at the slightest suggestion of change. Yet, as in Statement no. 3, we can learn constantly from others, provided our sole interest is not protecting our own territory. Forward looking leaders encourage employees to share ideas on how to improve procedures.

9. Even leaders may lack job assertiveness, feeling reluctant to offer suggestions for fear of being ridiculed. Rejection is a basic fear of everyone. In making proposals at work, there is a risk of having to fight a collective office mentality of "it has never been done that way before." As a result, effective leaders introduce change judiciously, but firmly.

10. Fearing for the future is perhaps the gravest error committed by those who find that they are unhappy in their work. If you view your present position as unfulfilling, you should examine your situation. Yesterday is a cancelled check. Tomorrow is but a promissory note. Today is your only legal tender. Anticipating the future is important, but no more so than enjoying the present, even with its often trying constant changes.

Nine Points to Help Aid You in a "Change"

Point One: Dare to love yourself in a world that gives no guarantee.

This is the fundamental rule and in many ways the most difficult to understand. If you've felt it, love sounds like utter crap. But it's true: love is the key. It frees you from your fears and gives you the courage to grow. Not that you'll never hurt again. Forget that right now. Life has pain. But through self-love, and all the other kinds, the pain won't matter as much. You will have an indestructible sanctuary and it begins with self-love. Avoid loving yourself and you will be trapped in a desperate life. It's just you and you: without your cooperation you're not going to get anywhere at all.

Point Two: Pay attention to what you feel. If you don't like the way you feel, it's usually a sign that you're not getting what you need.

Bad feelings are not simply "bad": they are good and useful too. They are a way you tell yourself something you might not want to hear. Whenever you have an annoying or painful feeling, it's a message that you're not getting something you need. We're not saying seek discomfort, but we are saying when it comes, listen!

Hurt takes many forms—sad, depressed, down, bored, blah, anxious, angry, or empty.

Even bodily symptoms can be signs of hidden hurts: back pain, headaches, tense, tired muscles. When you're missing something, your hurting says, wake up!

Point Three: Nobody can really tell you the "answer" to life's problems so you might as well try what feels right to you.

This one's quite a "theory" with us. Why? We spend a large portion of our lives working with people who are unnecessarily hurting. People who have "screwed themselves up" in a vain attempt to live up to someone else's expectations. They follow someone else's rules because they are afraid to listen to themselves. The tragic waste makes us sick. If you saw it everyday, it would make you sick, too.

Reprinted from Tom Rush and Randy Reed, *I Want To Change But I Don't Know How*, 1986, by permission of Price, Stern and Sloan, Inc.

Point Four: If what you are doing isn't getting you what you want, try something different.

Iron-clad common sense. Yet this principle is almost universally ignored. For most people, habit rules. Doing the "same old thing" is always easier than trying something new. It's as though people are terrified that something new might be even worse. If the new thing you try doesn't work better, then why not try another new thing! If you're not getting where you want to be, change is the only way to get there. *The best way to change the way you feel is to change the way you act.*

Point Five: If you're going to risk a change, try something likely to satisfy your needs while increasing your self-respect.

Finding your own way is a difficult task. It's hard to ever be sure what is best for you. Your chances for satisfaction will be good if you focus your energies on satisfying your needs and acting in a way you respect. When you're living to please others, it's easy to get "confused" or "stuck." When you give yourself permission to satisfy yourself first, ideas and plans can grow overnight.

Point Six: When you are considering a specific change, make a list of all the worst possible things that could happen.

Why? Change is a risky business. Anytime you do something new, you're taking a chance. Consider the possibilities; look at the pros and cons. Is the change worth it? Sometimes it isn't. But don't let your hidden fears decide for you. Get your worries on paper. Weigh the choice of spending the rest of your life feeling the way you do now against the risk of a bad outcome from your attempted change.

Point Seven: Before you change, take a few moments to praise yourself honestly, complimenting yourself for some specific attribute.

Example? Sensitive, caring, hardworking, anything that may apply to you. This might seem frivolous but berating yourself under the guise of "honest criticism" is a cowardly but terrible popular habit. Many people actually grow up embarrassed to like themselves. Little wonder they feel disorganized, "untogether." Self-contempt leads to internal mutiny. Treat any person, even yourself with contempt, and they are bound to be uncooperative. If you are not giving yourself at least as much praise as you do criticism, you'll never get to use your full power.

Point Eight: If you decide to take a chance, don't just think about it, do it!

Thinking has to be one the biggest wastes of time that we humans have invented. Worry is the only thing worse.

Insight and understanding change nothing—action does. If you decide to try—go for it. And don't criticize yourself while you're making an effort. Cheer yourself on! Many people are afraid to try anything wholeheartedly. Their efforts are undermined by their own self-criticism.

Point Nine: After you try a change evaluate the results; whatever happens, congratulate yourself for your courage to try.

Even if the change didn't satisfy your hopes, you will have avoided the trap of self-defeat. Your own support will let you feel better about yourself because you tried, because you risked, because you took the chance rather than pathetically resigning yourself to fate. Ultimately, how you feel about life is how you feel about yourself.

Nine Points to Help Aid You in a "Change"

1. Dare to love yourself.
2. Pay attention to what you feel.
3. Try what feels right to you.
4. If what you are doing isn't getting you what you want, try something different.
5. Try something likely to satisfy your needs while increasing your self-respect.
6. Make a list of all the worst possible things that could happen.
7. Praise yourself honestly.
8. Don't just think about it, do it!
9. Congratulate yourself for your courage to try.

Reprinted from Tom Rush and Randy Reed, *I Want To Change But I Don't Know How*, 1986, by permission of Price, Stern and Sloan, Inc.

Dealing With Fear

Part A

1. Of what specifically am I afraid? (Write out the answer. Writing will help you make that fear known and concrete. Then you can deal with the fear because it is no longer vague and general. A fear reduced to words on paper is not nearly as threatening as a vague fear roaming around inside you. Use the back of this page.)
2. How does this fear make me feel? ______________________________

   ____
3. Am I really afraid of failure, or am I afraid of someone else's opinion if I fail? ______________________________

   ____
   1. If yes, whose opinion? ______________________________
   2. If yes, why should I allow someone else's opinion to be more important than my own? ______________________________

   ____
4. Am I allowing fear to keep me immobilized by telling myself, "I can't do a thing—I'm scared to death"? ______________________________

   ____
5. Am I allowing fear to help me avoid the responsibility of taking some kind of action? ______________________________

   ____
6. Am I allowing fear to help me avoid the risk of taking some kind of action? ______________________________

   ____
7. What is the "reward" for my remaining fearful? ______________________________

   ____

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department of Adult and Technical Education.

8. What is the cost of remaining fearful? ______________________________

____

9. What are possible ways I can handle his fear? (List as many as you can. Record these answers without stopping to analyze them.) ____________

____

____

Part B

Dialogue

Share the answers to the questions with a class partner (or in a small group). Sharing your fear can help you look more objectively at it. Also, your partner can probably add to your list of alternatives for handling your fear. Finally, your partner can interject some positive ideas to help you stop the snowballing effect of fear.

Finally, underline the best solution (see questions No. 9) for handling your fear. Then ask yourself:

1. What is the worst thing that could happen if I put this alternative into action? ______________________________

____

2. How likely is the worst to happen? ______________________________

____

3. Could I handle the worst? ______________________________

____

4. What is the best thing that could happen if I put this alternative into action?

____

5. Could I handle the best? ______________________________

____

6. Am I ready to put this alternative into action? ____________________

____

(Note: Use the procedure details above for handling each of your fears individually.)

Obstacles to Setting Goals

Establishing goals and working toward those goals is not simple. Sometimes before we actually decide on specific goals we should recognize some barriers that may interfere with successful goal setting. Displaced homemakers, in particular, may need to deal with some very personal matters that may prevent them from setting goals or from successfully working toward their goals. Some of these obstacles may be:

1. **Past disappointments**

Many displaced homemakers have experienced painful disappointments in their lives. Divorce, death, and family conflicts leave emotional scars. It is impossible, however, to move toward the future if you are constantly remorseful about the past. Events in our past certainly have an effect on the way we deal with out present and our future. But if we allow the mistakes or hurts of the past to prevent us from dealing with life, we only cheat ourselves out of the enjoyment of the present.

Concentrate on putting the past behind you. Place your thoughts and actions on the present and the future. Setting new goals is a very effective way of redirecting your thoughts. If you establish goals that demand your attention and your time, past disappointments will tend to become less a priority. Even attaining small steps toward a new goal will result in feelings of competence and achievement.

In life, it isn't what happens to you that determines your future, it's your reaction to what happens that's important! One thing that cannot be taken from a person is that person's right to choose her attitude—her reaction to whatever happens in life. It is the fundamental right of each of us—actually our *responsibility*—to make choices affecting our lives. Success and happiness

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

do not depend on luck, but rather on hard work and perseverance.

People who have experienced great disappointments or who have made what they think of as mistakes in their lives find it very easy to treat trouble, depression, worry, and guilt as best friends. They concentrate their attention on self-pity and regret. Many of their statements begin with the words "If only I had . . ." or "I wish that I had not . . ." Every person makes mistakes in life, but feeling sorry for yourself and regretting your past only makes it impossible to enjoy the good things in life. These feelings place an insurmountable barrier between you and your goals for the future. In order to successfully begin the journey toward your new goals, put the past behind and learn to concentrate your most positive thoughts toward the future. Action is a very good cure for depression.

2. Lack of self-confidence

Most people feel a sense of inferiority in some part of their lives which may result in feelings of inadequacy or incompetence. We tend to concentrate on our weaknesses instead of our strengths. Displaced homemakers, particularly, may not be able to identify their good qualities. Since many of you have never worked or may have worked only at low-paying menial type jobs, you may visualize yourselves as lacking in potential. While it may be true that you lack training in specific skills, you probably overlook talents and abilities that can be effectively enhanced with proper training.

Women have also been conditioned passively to believe that self-confidence is very much akin to arrogance or boastfulness. We have been trained to minimize our own innate talents believing that acknowledging our special abilities is a sign of self-conceit. Men, of course, have always been more comfortable with recognizing their talents and

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

building on those talents or interests. Self-confidence is actually a very positive trait. It should be an accurate assessment of your own best qualities and abilities. Quiet, yet assertive, self-confidence provides a feeling of competence that enables you to move toward your goals.

Self-confidence results from a thoughtful assessment of your special qualities, interests, and abilities. Make a list—an *honest* evaluation—of your own best qualities. Take some time to do this. You'll probably find that you have many personal qualities in which you can take pride. Concentrate on these positive qualities. Knowing more about ourselves leads to the self confidence necessary for effective goal setting. An honest effort to evaluate good qualities usually leads to acknowledgement of at least as many pluses as minuses.

3. **Fear of failure**

The fear of failing looms like a dark cloud over many of our best plans for achieving goals. Displaced homemakers who view their divorce, for instance, as a failure may experience a high degree of anxiety toward setting new goals because they may feel that failure is sure to follow them.

Mistakes in the past may be viewed as failure or they may be viewed as education. It's true that this type of education can be painful. Many successes, however, have been prefaced by years of failure. Thomas Edison and Abraham Lincoln each experienced years of failure in many endeavors before they achieved even a small degree of success. The same is true of many famous high achievers.

Remember, if you fail in one instance or in one area of your life, that does not make you a failure. Very few people, if any, get through life without some failures. A person who does not fail at

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

something probably has not attempted much. To let one failure, or even several past failures, overshadow your entire future is a mistake!

4. Fear of risk

Fear of risk is very much like fear of failure. We hesitate to take risks because we fear failure. People often do not attempt new things until they are sure the results will be positive. You have to be willing to take some calculated risks. If you wait for the assurance that everything will always turn out well, you're likely not ever to try anything. After all, almost everything we do involves some risk.

Perhaps what we fear most is not a physical risk but an emotional risk. Enrolling for a class involves the risk of failing that class. It also contains the possibility of doing very well and being the avenue for a better-paying job. Accepting a new job involves the risk of being fired. On the other hand, it also provides the opportunity of finding a satisfying career with many other benefits.

Be willing to take calculated risks. Be willing to venture out. This does not mean being foolhardy. There are some definite ways to soften the risk factor and guard against failure to some extent. It's always a good idea to get advice from people who may have had similar experiences. Listen to sound advice, but don't listen to people who always see the dark side and who always seem to be predicting doom. Talk with several people in similar situations, then evaluate their advice in view of your own interests.

If you are considering a challenge that involves some particular risks, it might help to write a list of the possible negative outcomes. This may sound like a backwards way to approach a decision. However, acknowledging what risks you face may help you decide just how strongly

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

you feel about taking the risk. Ask yourself: What is the worst possible result of this decision and how would I cope with this result? If you are willing to go ahead and take the risk knowing what might be the most negative result possible, then you have openmindedly considered all the possibilities.

Once you acknowledge what risks may be involved in setting a goal and you have decided those risks are worth the challenge, then put those negative possibilities behind you and concentrate your full efforts toward making you goals successful. Make your plan toward achieving your goals very specific and detailed. Explore all the possibilities, and then set your sights on achieving your goal. Determination and perseverance go a long way toward conquering potential risks.

5. Procrastination

It always seems easier to plan to set goals "sometime." We tend to say, "Just as soon as . . . , then I'm going to set some new goals." There will always be reasons why the present is not the time. For some people, procrastination is a way of life. Why do anything now when you can put it off till later? Unless you make a plan for accomplishing your goals, chances are you'll continue to procrastinate indefinitely.

Sometimes people think of a goal they would like to attain, but they think lack of time is a problem. It's important, first, to decide what your specific goals will be and then to decide how much time you can spend working toward achieving those goals. It may startle you to discover how much can be accomplished in a minimum amount of time. For instance, if you decide you can spend only one hour a day toward a specific goal, that is approximately 30 hours a month or approximately 365 hours a year. Much can be achieved in that amount of time. If you want to write a book and

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

you can write only one page a day, you can write 365 pages in a year's time. The important thing is to set aside a definite time and then stick to it. Don't allow outside interruptions to cancel your plans.

It is very tempting to spend more time planning to set goals or planning ways to achieve your goals rather than actually working toward those goals. It is important to make the proper plans, to decide exactly what your goals will be, and then to set out definite objectives for attaining those goals. However, it is very easy to spend an excessive amount of time and effort in planning. Plan sufficiently, and then get started. Even taking small steps toward your goal gives a feeling of achievement.

Remember that the "perfect" time to begin working on your goals will probably never come. Circumstances in your life may never make it easy to make change or to eliminate risks. Sometimes you simply have to decide that change, however minor in the beginning, must begin immediately. Don't wait for the "perfect" time. Do it now!

6. Expectations too high

History is filled with accounts of people who had a dream, worked hard to achieve their goals, and in so doing made a contribution to all humankind. We are certainly indebted to the achievements of these outstanding persons. Does having a goal, however, necessarily have to be on such a high level? Many people think that setting goals means aiming to do something extraordinary that will bring fame and fortune. If achieving your goal brings that type of success, that's wonderful, but don't hesitate to set everyday, common type goals that don't necessarily shake the world. If your personal world is slightly shaken, this is success.

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Your goals may seem small when compared with someone else's goals, so you may be tempted to view your less extravagant goals as inconsequential. Goals setting must be a very personal commitment. One person's goals are not appropriate for anyone else. To set your own goals requires self-evaluation and assessment of exactly what you want your life to be. Don't be misled into thinking that your goals are more insignificant than another person's goals or that your goals must have global significance to be effective. Life develops even from the small decisions we make.

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Obstacles to Setting Goals

- Past disappointments
- Lack of self-confidence
- Fear of failure
- Fear of risk
- Procrastination
- Expectations too high

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Goal Setting Contract

Goal: What do I want?

Clarification: How will I know when I accomplish/attain my goal?

Action Plan: Write in specific actions, days and times.

1. Today:
2. This week:
3. This month:

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family*, 1985, by permission of the Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute.

Obstacles: How do I sabotage myself? What do I allow to get in my way?

Reward: What do I get? How will I celebrate my success?

Alternative: What will I do if I don't carry out my contract?

Completion date: ____________________

Today's date

My Signature

Witness

Competency 4.0

Skills to maintain wellness

4.01 Describe physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual health.
4.02 Assess one's state of health.
4.03 Identify strategies to maintain health.

Competency 4.0
Overview

Women are quite used to taking care of others, and managing the health of their families. Sometimes, though, women forget to take care of themselves. Especially during rough times in our lives, or times of transition (as discussed in Competency 3.0: Skills to Make Transitions), we let our health go.

This competency addresses issues of health and wellness, and helps participants understand the importance of developing strategies for maintaining their own good health.

Participants completing Competency 4.0: Skills to Maintain Wellness will be able to:

4.01 Describe physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual health
4.02 Assess one's state of health
4.03 Identify strategies to maintain health

Indicator 4.01 provides an opportunity for participants to think about and discuss their goals in terms of health. What does health mean to them? Through instructor-led discussions, participants will gain an awareness of holistic health issues. In Indicator 4.02, participants examine and assess their own health. A variety of activities and quizzes are provided. Finally, in Indicator 4.03, participants consider information about nutrition, exercise and body image. Instructors may ask participants to set wellness goals for themselves.

Competency 4.0: Skills to Maintain Wellness

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
4.01	Describe physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual health	Discussion	*Are You As Happy As You Could Be? (note accompanying overhead)*
4.02	Assess one's state of health	Activity	*Wellness Pie*
		Activity	*Checking Out My Health*
		Activity	*Choosing a Healthy Lifestyle: Wellness Inventory*
4.03	Identify strategies to maintain health	Discussion	*The Top 10 Nutritional No-No's*
		Discussion	*Finally Lose Weight! The Self Esteem Plan*
		Activity	*What Makes You Happy?*

Resources

Clark, Carolyn C. (1981). Enhancing wellness: A guide for self-care. New York: Springer.

Dufty, William. (1986). Sugar blues. New York: Warner Books.

Hay, Louise L. (1987). You can heal your life. Santa Monica, CA: Hay House, Inc.

Pelletier, Kenneth. (1984). Mind as healer, mind as slayer: A holistic approach to preventing stress disorders. Magnolia, MA: Peter Smith Publishing, Inc.

Shealy, C. Norman. (1988). Ninety days to self-health. Canal Winchester, OH: Ariel Press.

Travis, John W., and Ryan, Regina S. (1986). Wellness workbook: A guide to attaining high level wellness. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Are You As Happy As You Could Be?

Why does one person have a zest for living while another who is in the same boat just drags along? Most mental health professionals know there is no formula for happiness. People are just too different. However, there is surprising agreement on what factors contribute to happiness. Here are the top 10 things that happy people do to stay happy:

1. **Love yourself.**
2. **Seek the loving life.** When you focus attention on someone else, you feel better about yourself.
3. **Join the workaday world.** Being productive is central to satisfaction.
4. **Enjoy the power of touch.** When you touch others you are completing a circuit that sends off sparks of well-being.
5. **Live one day at a time.** Worrying about what was or fretting about what is to come is a sure way to ruin a perfectly good day.
6. **Turn on the laughter.** Laughing can soften the blow.
7. **Move your muscles.** Aside from its physical benefits, exercise is a tonic for the sour; it elevates self-confidence, disspates anxiety.
8. **Search for meaning.** The zestful one has things to believe in, which is what makes life worthwhile.
9. **Take time to waste.** Use your leisure time for fun and relaxation.
10. **Give to others.** Altruism is wonderful medicine; it lets you forget your own troubles and makes you feel good about yourself.

Reprinted from *Emotional Health*, ©1985 by Rodale Press. Permission granted by Rodale Press, Inc.: Emmaus, PA 18098.

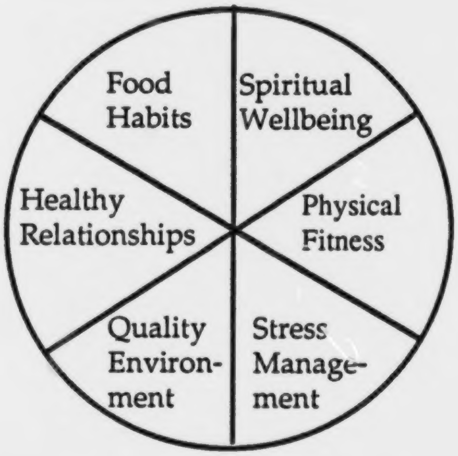
Top Ten Things That Happy People Do To Stay Happy

1. Love yourself.
2. Seek the loving life.
3. Join the workaday world.
4. Enjoy the power of touch.
5. Live one day at a time.
6. Turn on the laughter.
7. Move your muscles.
8. Search for meaning.
9. Take time to waste.
10. Give to others.

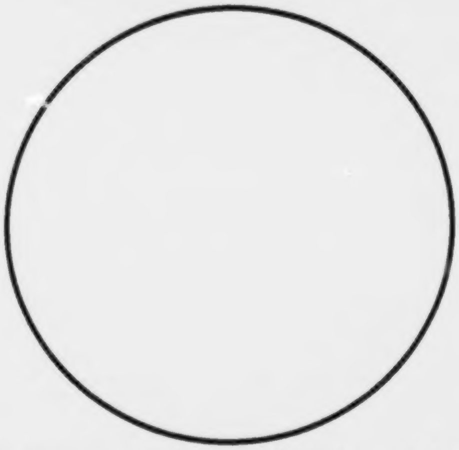
Reprinted from *Emotional Health,* ©1985 by Rodale Press. Permission granted by Rodale Press, Inc.: Emmaus, PA 18098.

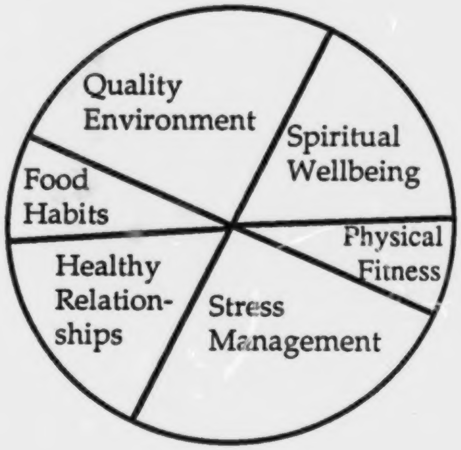
Wellness Pie

This wellness pie indicates the components of a healthy lifestyle. Self responsibility is the element which is common to all slices of the pie.


Food Habits
Spiritual Wellbeing
Healthy Relationships
Physical Fitness
Quality Environment
Stress Management

Using the empty pie below, diagram your present lifestyle. Make the size of each slice of your pie correspond to the amount of attention you give to that wellness component in every day life. For example, your pie may in reality look something like the one on the right.




Quality Environment
Spiritual Wellbeing
Food Habits
Physical Fitness
Healthy Relationships
Stress Management

Are any areas of your life being neglected?

Are any missing?

Which areas are most important to you?

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Checking Out My Health

An important part of the evaluation process is an assessment of your physical well-being and general attitudes toward health.

1. Rate your present general health status:

   ______ Excellent ______ Fair

   ______ Good ______ Poor

2. On what basis did you evaluate your general health?

   ______ Recent physical exam

   ______ Infrequent illness

   ______ Frequent illness

   Other factors (describe) ______________________________

   ____

3. Rate your present energy level.

   ______ Excellent ______ Fair

   ______ Good ______ Poor

4. On what basis did you evaluate your present energy level?

   ____

   ____

5. To what factors do you attribute your present energy level?

   ____

   ____

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

6. Check your health concerns.

______ Excessive use of non prescription drugs

______ Excessive use of prescription drugs

______ Excessive use of alcohol

______ Excessive use of tobacco

______ Excessive use of stimulants (coffee, tea, cola)

______ Chronic (longstanding) underweight

______ Acute (recent) underweight

______ Chronic overweight (____ pounds)

______ Acute overweight

______ Chronic nervousness

______ Acute nervousness

______ Poor nutrition

______ Poor sleep habits

______ Lack of regular exercise

______ Infrequent self-examination for breast cancer

______ Frequent periods of depression

______ Occasional periods of depression

______ Unexplained anxiety

______ Other concerns (list or describe)

7. Date (year) of your last general physical examination ________________

8. Date of your last dental examination ______________________________

9. Date of your last eye examination ________________________________

10. Indicate the frequency of the following examinations by checking the appropriate columns.

	Semi-annually	**Annually**	**Biannually**	**2-5 years**	**5-10 years**	**Never**
Gynecological (pap smear, breast exam, venereal disease)						
Urinalysis						
Blood tests (especially hemoglobin or hematocrit)						
Electrocardiogram						
Blood pressure, pulse and heart						
Chest x-ray						
Proctoscopic						
Eye exam (include glaucoma)						
Audiological exam						
Dental exam						
Other (specify)						

11. What are physical handicaps which you must consider in a career choice, employment, or further education? (Example: blind in one eye, heart condition, leg injury, etc.)

____

____

12. What knowledge do you feel would assist you in maintaining or improving your health?

______ Nutrition

______ Diet

______ Exercise

______ Drug and/or alcohol abuse

______ Mental health

______ Other (describe) ________________________

____

13. Plan for improvement:

1. ____

____

____

2. ____

____

____

3. ____

____

____

Choose a Healthy Lifestyle

Some people take care of themselves only when they feel they're coming down with something. When they have a cold, they get plenty of rest and drink orange juice. When they don't feel well, they watch what they eat. The rest of the time their habits are not healthful.

Other people don't wait to get sick to take care of themselves. They do a number of things to make sure they stay healthy. They try to eat right all the time. Exercise and rest are part of their day—every day. These people avoid certain habits that have been shown to harm health.

What is the difference between the two kinds of people? In the first case, the people are trying to *get* healthy. In the second case, they are trying to *stay* healthy.

People in the first group are more likely to get sick. They are more likely to do things that give sickness a chance to strike. People in the second group try to keep themselves healthy, so sickness barely has a fighting chance.

Which group do you belong to? Is there a way to find out? Answer the following questions. They can give you an idea as to whether or not you have a healthy lifestyle.

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Wellness Inventory

Read each of the following statements. Decide if the statement is 1) **always** true for you; 2) **usually** true for you; 3) **never** true for you. Then check one of the three spaces. Determine your lifestyle scores as directed *after you complete the inventory.*

Stress Management	Always	Usually	Never
1. At bedtime, I fall asleep easily.	_____	_____	_____
2. I get a full night's sleep.	_____	_____	_____
3. If awakened, it's easy for me to fall asleep again.	_____	_____	_____
4. I don't bite my fingernails.	_____	_____	_____
5. I take 15 to 20 minutes a day for myself to do whatever I want.	_____	_____	_____
6. Rather than worry about something I can't solve right away, I put off thinking about the problem until later.	_____	_____	_____
7. I don't worry about money often.	_____	_____	_____
8. I make sure I take time each day to relax.	_____	_____	_____
9. I am alert and rarely tire out (except after hard physical activity).	_____	_____	_____
10. I am happy with my life.	_____	_____	_____
Total:	_____	_____	_____

Personal Health and Safety	Always	Usually	Never
1. I do something to protect my home from fire and safety hazards.	_____	_____	_____
2. I use dental floss.	_____	_____	_____

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

	Always	Usually	Never
3. I don't smoke.	____	____	____
4. I have fewer than three colds a year.	____	____	____
5. I try to stay away from fumes or exhaust gases.	____	____	____
6. I turn off appliances when they are not in use.	____	____	____
7. I collect papers, cans, glass, or other things that can be recycled.	____	____	____
8. The thermostat in my home is set at 68 degrees or lower in the winter.	____	____	____
9. During the summer months, I use air conditioning only when necessary.	____	____	____
10. I wear a lap safety belt 90% of the time that I ride in a car.	____	____	____
Total:	____	____	____

Nutritional Awareness	Always	Usually	Never
1. I eat at least one raw fruit or vegetable a day.	____	____	____
2. I drink fewer than five soft drinks a week.	____	____	____
3. I avoid salting food after it is on my plate.	____	____	____
4. I avoid needing medicine.	____	____	____
5. I have a good appetite.	____	____	____
6. I stay within 10 pounds of my ideal weight.	____	____	____
7. I avoid eating sugared cereal for breakfast.	____	____	____
8. I avoid eating between meals.	____	____	____
9. My biggest meal of the day is breakfast.	____	____	____
10. I avoid eating fried foods.	____	____	____
Total:	____	____	____

Self-Responsibilities/Feelings	Always	Usually	Never
1. It's easy for me to laugh.			
2. I like getting compliments.			
3. It's easy for me to give honest compliments to others.			
4. I have at least five close friends.			
5. I look forward to the future.			
6. At times I like to be alone.			
7. I think it's OK to feel anger, fear, joy or sadness.			
8. I feel OK about crying and allow myself to do so.			
9. I listen to and accept good advice rather than get angry.			
10. I would seek help from friends or counselors if I had a problem.			
Total:			

Physical Fitness	Always	Usually	Never
1. Whenever practical, I climb stairs rather than use escalators or elevators.			
2. I regularly ride my bike, run, or walk for exercise.			
3. I like to exercise.			
4. I take part in a strenuous activity at least twice a week.			
5. I do some warm-up exercises before doing hard exercise.			

	Always	Usually	Never
6. I urge my family to join in physical activity.	______	______	______
7. I have enough energy to get through daily activities.	______	______	______
8. I do some form of stretching exercise for 15-20 minutes at least twice a week.	______	______	______
9. I don't ride in a car when I am going some place within walking distance.	______	______	______
10. Physical activity is part of my life.	______	______	______
Total:	______	______	______

Find Your Lifestyle Scores

You can get an idea of the "health" of your lifestyle by scoring your answers to the statements. Here is how to score them:

Never = 1 Point
Usually = 2 Points
Always = 3 Points

1. Add your scores in each of the five areas listed.
2. Write down your scores.

Stress ______ Points
Personal ______ Points
Nutrition ______ Points
Self-Responsibility/Feelings ______ Points
Fitness ______ Points

3. Now look at the lifestyle chart below to see where your scores appear.
4. Answer these questions:
   - From the lifestyle chart, what can you say about your health habits?
   - In what areas are your health scores best (highest)? Who helped you build these good health habits? How could you make these good scores better?
   - In what areas can you see room for improvement (which had the lowest scores)? What do you think you could do about these? What things might be hard to change? Who could help you change your health habits?

Stress:
1-10: Risky
11-15: Good Start
16-20: On Your Way
21-25: Getting Close
26-30: Staying Healthy

Personal:
1-10: Risky
11-15: Good Start
16-20: On Your Way
21-25: Getting Close
26-30: Staying Healthy

Fitness:
1-10: Risky
11-15: Good Start
16-20: On Your Way
21-25: Getting Close
26-30: Staying Healthy

Nutrition:
1-10: Risky
11-15: Good Start
16-20: On Your Way
21-25: Getting Close
26-30: Staying Healthy

Self-Responsibility/Feelings:
1-10: Risky
11-15: Good Start
16-20: On Your Way
21-25: Getting Close
26-30: Staying Healthy

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

The Top 10 Nutritional No-No's
Unexpected insights that could save your diet and your health

There are so many nutritional factors out there said to be bad for us that some people think this is a good excuse to do *nothing*. Sugar . . . fat . . . additives . . . calories . . . cholesterol . . . fast foods—do we have to maintain 18-hour-a-day guard duty against *all* of them?

Susan Luke, M.S., R.D., who is a nutrition specialist at the outpatient clinic, Sport-Medicine-Boston, answered our challenge to come up with the no-no's that most deserve our attention. She surveyed a number of nutrition experts, and used her own experience in dealing with clients as well.

Her choices are given in order of importance, or at least in order of frequency of mention by our experts. After each one, there's a bracing shot of purely positive advice.

Eating Without a Plan or a Goal

When you get in your car to drive somewhere, you have a destination in mind. And you pretty much know exactly how you're going to get there. If you didn't, you'd probably be out of gas in Labrador right now instead of reading this article.

But how many of us have a plan—a "road map"—for eating a healthy diet that will help us perform at our top potential? If you do, you're one of the fortunate few. Too many, though, have excellent intentions without any sort of real plan. No matter how hard we try to navigate through individual meals, our chances of following the right course day after day are poor.

Action for Today:

Develop a healthy nutrition plan. The rest of our article gives you some good ideas. So do lots more articles in this issue of *Prevention*, and others. Put some clear principles down in writing and post them in a highly visible spot so you can follow your map.

Exceeding the Speed Limit

To give another automotive analogy, if you were traveling by car from coast to coast, you wouldn't plan on making it in one day. Well, it's the same way with your diet. Changing food habits is a 45-mile-per-hour zone. Trying for 90 will only land you in a ditch.

Remember this little jingle: Inch by inch, anything is a cinch.

When you combine that kind of gradual change with the plan we mentioned, you're bound to have a higher chance of success.

Action for Today:

Write down a time frame for accomplishing specific parts of your diet plan. Be realistic. In fact, be kind to yourself. If you don't make it easy, you may not make it at all.

Going Longer Than Five Hours Without Eating

This is an important follow-up to the first two tips. According to Evelyn Tribole, registered dietician

Reprinted from *Prevention*, January 1991, by permission of Rodale Press, Inc.

and director of nutrition services at Columbia Pictures Entertainment, in Culver City, California, "After five hours without eating, you are subject to ravenous hunger and you do not care about health goals and good intentions. It's 'grab what you can' and you become vulnerable to your eating environment." Tribole feels that people need to eat at planned times so they have a sense of control over their food choices, rather than their hunger having the control.

Wayne Callaway, M.D., and a member of the USDA 1990 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, agrees that we need to have regular eating patterns. "There are biological rhythms and hunger patterns that are determined by our eating patterns. If we can get people to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner in adequate amounts, then appetite patterns will be established and we will eat more regular meals. If one skips meals, the urge to binge is greater."

Action for Today:

Keep a food diary and identify your eating patterns. If necessary, revise these patterns so that you consume your food at regular intervals.

Not Giving Fat a Wide Berth

Excess dietary fats are known to cause health problems. The average American is consuming 80 to 100 grams of fat per day. That is equivalent to almost a whole stick of butter every day! In the 1990 Dietary Guidelines, one goal is "Choose a Diet Low in Fat, Saturated Fat and Cholesterol." The adult diet should include a maximum of only 30 percent of calories from fat. This would be 67 grams of fat for a 2,000-calorie diet.

Keeping that 67 grams of fat in mind, William Castelli, M.D., director of the Framingham Heart Study, suggests that we read labels and begin to count our fat intake. Of those 67 grams of fat, only one-third should be saturated (22 grams of fat). It is the saturated fat in our diet that plays the most havoc with our health. Saturated fat is found in all animal fats and the tropical fats coconut, palm, and palm-kernel oils. Today more and more foods have nutrition labeling. While saturated fat might not yet be on the label, total grams of fat is listed. Getting that number down to the 60- to 70-gram level is a good start. (*Prevention* encourages working gradually down to 50 to 60 grams of fat a day.) To do that you have to become label savvy. Dr. Castelli says, "Today because of modern food technology, we have the ability to find substitutes that were never available before." We have choices, and if you count grams of fat, you should discover that you can work in your favorites . . . in moderation.

Action for Today:

Establish a fat budget for yourself based on 50 to 70 grams of fat a day. Begin to look at the fat content of the foods you eat, and actually visualize the amount of fat in a gram. The weight of a standard paper clip is about one gram. So, buttering a slice of toast adds about one gram. Two to three peanuts adds another. Modify some of those choices to lower-fat variations.

Skimping on Produce and Grains

On the one hand we are eating too much fat and on the other hand we are consuming too few complex carbohydrates. Let's flip this around! The longstanding basic four food groups recommend two servings a day of fruits, two servings of vegetables and four servings of grains (bread, pasta, for example). The 1990 Dietary Guidelines have increased these numbers to two fruits, three vegetables and six grains. These products are high in complex carbohydrates, fiber and many vitamins and minerals.

Unfortunately, food-consumption statistics from the USDA Hanes II study show that the average woman age 19 to 50 is consuming only one cup of cooked vegetables and one medium serving of fruit per day. Mary Abbott Hess, registered dietician and president of the American Dietetic Association, states that there is a "trend toward encouraging the use of more fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. In restaurants there is a shift toward a greater proportion of the appetizers and entrées being the complex carbohydrates."

Action for Today:

Eat more vegetables, including dry beans and peas; more fruits; and breads, cereals, pasta and rice.

Being a Member of the Clean Plate Club

So many people clean their plate today because of old messages they received as children. Today we need to eat based on our present needs, not on old tape recordings playing in our mind. Tribole feels that this is one of our biggest problems, "especially when eating out. We get twice what we need. If people could learn to modify this issue, they could eat whatever food they want; just eat 50 percent of it."

Action for Today:

I will examine my need to clean my plate. Instead I will eat based on healthy eating goals.

Trying to be Too Thin

Wanting to look good, and be reasonably trim, is a sensible goal. But wanting to look like a fashion model isn't. Models are usually very young, diet strenuously and still need to have the right genes to achieve that special look—if only for a few years!

And that look is neither normal nor healthy for the great majority of women.

John Foreyt, Ph.D., director of the nutrition research clinic, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, says, "According to a recent survey the average woman is 5' 3 1/2" tall, 134 pounds, with a dress size of 10-12. She wants to be 5' 4 1/2" tall, 123 pounds and a dress size of 8. She wants to be 11 pound thinner! On the other hand, the average man is 5' 10" tall, 172 pounds, with a 33" waist. He wants to be 5' 11" tall, 171 pounds with a 33" waist." Dr. Callaway, a leader in the field of obesity research, feels that, "We are victims of a distorted culture, and not just our genes."

Action for Today:

Recognize the body shape that you inherited. Accept this shape and feed it a healthy diet to achieve good health, not a banana figure.

Trying to Lose Weight Without an Exercise Program

Most people focus on food when trying to lose or maintain their weight. Diane Morris, Ph.D., R.D., previously at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, now at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, finds that when questioned, most people have given some thought to their food choices for the day, but few have thought out their exercise plan. But University of Massachusetts studies show that, "when individuals were divided into four groups, the group that lost the most weight was the group that combined a low-fat intake with an exercise program." According to Dr. Morris, "a low-fat diet with exercise helps protect lean body mass, which is metabolically active tissue, and promotes fat loss."

Losing weight and keeping it off is tricky. Research continues to tell us that exercise is an important key to long-term success, but many people find it difficult to work exercise into an already packed schedule. If you are serious about losing weight and keeping it off, then you'll have to reorganize and treat yourself to increased physical activity.

Action for Today:

Begin an exercise program of choice. Join the *Prevention* Walking Club, for instance. Start slowly. Do just enough today so you look forward to doing it again tomorrow!

Skimping on Water

Water has been termed the forgotten nutrient. The daily turnover of fluid in the body exceeds that of any other nutrient. Because it is essential to so many body processes, adequate water must be available in the body at all times. On average a total of two to three quarts are lost every day. Based on these losses, a minimum of two quarts of fluid should be consumed each day. The remaining fluid needs will come from the liquids found in our solid foods. "Unfortunately most of our fluid needs are met by flavored fluids with lots of calories without many nutrients," states George Blackburn, M.D., chief, nutritional metabolism laboratory, New England Deaconess Hospital, Boston. "We need to break that habit by consuming a cup of water before we drink the other. The average person is a pint (16 ounces) short on water each day, putting stress on the kidneys."

Action for Today:

Make a conscious effort each day to drink one quart (four cups) of water along with four cups of a variety of flavored fluids, such as juices and low-fat milk.

Giving Food Magical Powers of Good or Evil

There is no doubt about it: A carrot is a healthier snack than a piece of candy. But snacks—or even whole meals—are only small components of your overall diet. Within the framework of a daily diet, there is room for almost anything—in small amounts.

The problem with categorizing all foods as either good or bad is that it gives them a kind a power they really don't deserve. If you should eat a bit of food on your personal "bad" list, you may think of yourself as a bad person. A failure at eating well. A person with no willpower.

Don't give food so much power to control your mind.

In the course of a week, there are few people who can't eat a couple of pieces of candy or other indulgences, and *still* have excellent overall diets. Some foods may even surprise you when you check the facts: McDonald's, for instance, has a shake with less than two grams of fat. Black-and-white thinking is simply unrealistic. There is, after all, just one shade of white and one shade of black. Then there are thousands of shades of gray. What we need to learn is to eat in the light-gray zone!

Action for Today:

I recognize that I can eat anything I want. Some foods are healthier than others, and I should eat more of those.

Our sources: George L. Blackburn, M.D., Ph.D., Prevention *advisor, and chief, nutritional metabolism laboratory, New England Deaconess Hospital, Boston;* Wayne Callaway, M.D., *USDA 1990 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee member and associate clinical professor of medicine, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.;* William P. Castelli, M.D. *medical director, Framingham Heart Study, Framingham, Massachusetts;* John Foreyt, Ph.D., *director of the nutrition research clinic, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston;* Mary Abbott Hess, R.D., *president, American Dietetic Association;* Diane Morris, Ph.D., R.D., *University of Manitoba, Winnipeg;* Evelyn Tribole, R.D., *director of nutrition services at Columbia Pictures Entertainment, Culver City, California.*

Finally Lose Weight! The Self-Esteem Plan

A winning strategy that begins with body-image building and positive self talk.

For Marsha Blair, losing weight was a 15-year-long losing proposition. She struggled with one diet after another and watched helplessly as the weight inevitably crept back on. "I hated being fat and I was miserable because I just couldn't seem to do anything about it," says Marsha. "I felt totally out of control." Having exhausted every diet plan and program imaginable—and still 125 pounds from her goal weight—Marsha decided it was time to accept her fate.

"I realized I was spending my whole life fighting this weight battle. I wasn't happy with myself or my life. I kept thinking that some day, when I lost the weight, I'd be able to do all the things I wanted to do. In effect," she says, "I was postponing living."

It was at this point that Marsha took a bold new stance: She made up her mind that, even if she couldn't be thin, she could be happy. She stopped badgering and criticizing herself about her weight problem. She shopped for new clothes and makeup, reviving her pride in the way she looked. She started treating herself with respect.

What happened after that?

Believe it or not, Marsha (who, along with her husband Scott, won *Prevention's* Husband/Wife Body Makeover Contest) succeeded at losing 112 pounds. She's kept it off, too, for almost two years now.

First, Love Yourself

"It's as if you have to love it before you can lose it," says eating-disorders expert Emily Fox Kales, Ph.D., at McLean Hospital in Boston. "Liking yourself 'as is' enables you to care enough to take steps to improve your body physically."

Dr. Kales finds that many people who can't accept themselves overweight organize their lives around the day when they'll be thin. "I see overweight women who live in baggy clothes because they feel undeserving of nice clothes. It's a form of self-flagellation," she says.

So many of us—women in particular—are critical of our bodies, expecting perfection. Joyce Nash, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist and author of *Maximize Your Body Potential* (Bull Publishing), believes that this perfectionism often stands in the way of successful weight loss. "I have patients who feel that their eating behavior and bodies have to be flawless." The problem with perfectionist standards is that you set yourself up for failure.

"People who always strive to reach the ideal constantly feel they should do better," says Dr. Nash.

Reprinted from *Prevention*, January 1991, by permission of Rodale Press, Inc.

No matter what they've achieved, it's not enough. They'll chastise themselves for falling a half-pound short of their weekly goal rather than acknowledging the fact that they're making progress. Or they'll quit dieting altogether just because they happened to give in to one irresistible craving.

To make matters worse, "each time [a dieter] loses then regains weight, she loses a little more self-respect and gains greater feelings of inadequacy," adds Thomas Wadden, Ph.D., co-director of the University of Pennsylvania Obesity Research Group.

Overwhelmed with feelings of worthlessness—and driven by her own negative thoughts—she gets caught in a vicious circle of failure. Too often, then, weight control becomes her nemesis. She'll deny herself her favorite treats and sentence herself to high-intensity, do-or-die workouts. Sometimes she'll force herself into uncomfortably tight clothes, thinking that will motivate her to stop eating. The odds that anyone can peel pounds *permanently* with this approach may be pretty slim. Chances are, you'll be so miserable, you'll look to food to soothe yourself, Dr. Kales warns.

Body-Image Building

Building self-esteem is the often overlooked but critical first step to any weight-loss program, explains *Prevention* advisor Kelly Brownell, Ph.D., co-director of the University of Pennsylvania Obesity Research Group. If you care about yourself, you'll be inclined to exercise regularly because it makes you feel good. You'll be willing to embrace a healthful, slimming diet, because your body thrives on it. And you can recover from the occasional binge—and get right back on course—because you forgive yourself. In short, you'll be in control.

To get started, here are a few body (image) building exercises:

Think of yourself as an attractive person, *now*. Take pride in your appearance. Treat yourself to a manicure. Try a flattering new hairstyle. Buy yourself a new dress sized to fit you comfortably, now. What's important is that you develop a positive attitude about the way you look at your present weight.

As a case in point, noted weight-control expert Susan Wooley, Ph.D., at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, describes an attractive client who complained about acquaintances criticizing her weight. Dr. Wooley asked the client to go through one day imagining herself as the most beautiful person on earth.

Having followed Dr. Wooley's advice, the woman reported that total strangers complimented her on her appearance. Dr. Wooley's point is that if you hold yourself in high esteem, others will treat you in ways that continue to make you feel good about yourself.

Be nice to yourself. Buy yourself flowers, tickets to the theater or a book you've been wanting. Don't wait until you've lost the weight to start living.

Focus on your strengths. Do you have a good sense of humor? Are

Lose 10, 25, even 50-plus pounds with the self-esteem plan

How much do you have to lose? Is it 10, 25, 50 pounds, maybe more? Whatever your (realistic) goal, the self-esteem plan can help you achieve it.

For a complete weight-loss program, you'll need to incorporate the body-image-building exercises and positive self-talk tips described in this article with the following steps:

Take a 30- to 40-minute walk at least every other day. Keep a comfortable pace, one that you can maintain. When it comes to aerobic exercise for weight loss, it's consistency and distance, not speed or intensity, that matter.

View exercise as more than a means to weight control, however. Use it to reward yourself—enjoy just getting out and involving yourself with nature.

Invest 20 minutes three times a week in a light resistance-training program. Ask the fitness coach at your health club to instruct you in a routine using the Universal or Nautilus equipment. Or buy a set of free weights to use at home (see "Muscle Up Your Health!" *Prevention,* December 1990, for a program to get you started). Resistance training builds lean muscle tissue like no other exercise can. And the "leaner" you are the meaner your calorie burner. That's because muscle is more metabolically active than fat. (So you burn more calories even while you're sitting still.)

Eat lean. Stop counting calories: It's not only how much you eat, but *what* you eat that counts as well. Studies suggest that dietary fat goes to body fat faster than anything else. So become fat-wise. Switch to low-fat, then nonfat dairy products; choose skinless poultry, fish and the leanest cuts of meat; focus your meals on pasta, rice, vegetables and legumes—the complex carbohydrates. Marsha Blair (who, together with her husband, won *Prevention's* Husband/Wife Body Makeover Contest) says that it's a way of like for her family. "I used to think that I could never eat that way. Now it's not a hardship."

If you're counting calories, count grams of fat instead (see "Two Formulas for Fighting Fat, *Prevention,* January 1991, p. 82). For more on low-fat eating see "The Consumer's Guide to Low-Fat Shopping," *Prevention,* January 1991, p. 75, and "Slim Feasts," p. 66.

Make changes gradually but permanently. Weight control is a lifelong proposition. So, by introducing new exercise and dietary habits slowly and allowing your body a chance to incorporate them into your daily routine, there's a much better chance that you'll be able to maintain those habits for life. When people ask Marsha how she lost more than 100 pounds, she says, "I changed my whole lifestyle—one step at a time."

Give yourself enough time to take the weight off. For best results, aim to drop (on average) about one pound per week.

Enlist your mate's support. Or find a support group that can give you encouragement and positive reinforcement in your weight-loss efforts. Recent studies suggest that having a supportive "family" can improve your chances for long-term success.

Remember to love yourself. Every day, do something nice, just for you. Take a bubble bath, buy something new, get your hair or nails done, take a peaceful walk. And be forgiving if your weight-loss efforts slip once in a while. Just pick up where you left off and keep at it.

you skilled at your job? Do you have a knack for parenting? Do you care about social causes? Is creativity your forte? Do you have a network of very good friends? Are you romantic? Usually, the things you're good at are the things you enjoy doing. So, make it a point to work at building your strengths every day—and remind yourself of your accomplishments.

Stop accepting all of the blame for your weight problem. "We try to unhook people from the notion that being overweight is a mortal sin," says Dr. Kales.

Be realistic about what you can achieve. "Accept the things about you that you cannot change," says Dr. Nash. Genetics and metabolism are important contributors to weight problems. If you've been 75 pounds overweight for 15 years, for example, you may have to settle for a goal weight that's somewhat higher than what the "idea weight charts" specify.

Set small, manageable goals. Start by choosing one or two small positive changes you can make today that you'll be successful at. They may be as simple as taking a 10-minute walk at lunch or eating an apple instead of a doughnut on your morning coffee break. At the end of the day, acknowledge your accomplishments, no matter how small they may be.

Stop gearing your life around food and your weight. As Dr. Nash puts it, "Life is not about weight control. It's about having a commitment beyond yourself—raising a family, contributing to your community, doing a good job."

Start exercising now. A moderate program of aerobic exercise (like a brisk walk at least every other day) is a way of being good to yourself—and not just because it burns calories. One theory about why exercise increases the likelihood of losing weight and keeping it off is that it boosts your mood and self-esteem. Dr. Kales believes that exercise can also give you a sense of control that, in turn, improves your self-concept. Bean Robinson, Ph.D., a Minneapolis-St. Paul based psychologist, is another proponent of using exercise as a body-image builder. Those who are self-conscious about exercising in front of others should go about it more privately, she says. Take a walk in the park. Or buy indoor exercise equipment like a stationary bicycle.

Dr. Robinson also advises that you abandon silly notions about exercise clothing. "A lot of 'large' people have rules about what they can and can't wear. Many don't wear shorts, for instance." Try to free yourself from these ideas.

Positive Self-Talk

How you talk to yourself throughout the day can also have a tremendous impact on your self-image—and the success of your weight-loss program. Whether you know it or not, you talk to yourself all the time, not necessarily consciously or out loud. If you see a chocolate cake on the counter, for instance, your body isn't automatically drawn to it. In deciding whether or not to have a piece, you might say to yourself, "I've had a tough day. I deserve this." Or, "I've been dieting all week and haven't lost a pound, so I may as well eat it."

What's your next likely course of action? Probably cake-eating. But what might happen if instead you said to yourself, "I've had a bad day, but it won't solve anything if I eat cake. It won't make me feel any better." This kind of self-talk may well prevent you from eating.

The point is that self-talk plays an important role in determining how you'll act and how you feel about yourself. If your self-talk is negative and defeating, you may likely engage in self-destructive behavior like binge-eating or nibbling when you're not even hungry. On the other hand, if your self-talk is positive, you can often prevent inappropriate eating and feeling bad about yourself.

Here are some suggestions from the experts about how to make your self-talk more positive:

Develop an awareness of your negative, self-defeating thoughts. Each time you overeat or feel you've strayed from your goals, reflect on your thoughts before, during and after you ate. (It helps some people to keep a thought diary.) Even better, try to get in touch with yourself before the fact; when you feel like eating, stop and think about what's going through your head. Let's say you find yourself reaching into a bag of cookies while you're sitting in a traffic jam on your way home from work. You may find yourself thinking something like, "This will make me feel better." Or, "I've eaten three cookies, so I may as well eat the whole bag." If you have trouble getting in touch with your self-statements, say to yourself, "I'm acting as if . . . ," and complete the sentence. You might say, "I'm acting as if dinner is three hours away." Or, "I'm acting as if this will make the traffic jam go away."

Analyze your thoughts. Ask yourself if they're rational, true or helpful. In the case of the traffic jam, ask if it's really true that you can't wait until dinner. (After all, are you going to die if you don't eat the cookies?) Will eating the cookies really make the traffic jam break up? Will you really feel better after having eaten a whole bag of cookies? In the long run, will a mere three cookies make any big difference in your weight?

Challenge your thoughts. Come up with more positive, helpful self-statements. For example, "Of course, I can wait until dinner; if I wait the hunger may pass." Or, "Eating will not solve the problem." As for the classic, "I may as well eat the whole bag," challenge it with "Three cookies won't make me gain weight, but eating the whole bag might."

Give yourself credit. Instead of obsessing about the one day out of an entire week that you overate, focus on the six that went just fine.

Stop "catastrophizing." Instead of saying, "If I don't lose all this weight before my class reunion, I won't go," say to yourself, "I'll do my best. If I lose even a few pounds, I'll feel better."

Don't make excuses or rationalize. Challenge thoughts like, "There's no way I can cut back with the holidays coming." Or, "I deserve to eat it since I've been so good." Instead say, "It's hard to watch what I eat when I go out, but I can plan ahead." Or, "I deserve to celebrate, but I'll buy myself something other than food."

Avoid "never" and "forever" statements. How realistic is it to think that you'll never eat another candy bar or that you'll exercise every day for the rest of your life? Give yourself permission to deviate; no one can be perfect all the time. Marsha Blair, loser of 112 pounds, says she thinks she failed on many diets because she couldn't have certain foods. "It just made me want them more," she says. Now she gives herself the option of eating treats, which makes them less attractive. On a recent trip, she allowed herself dessert each night. But she doesn't do that every day.

Stop using food as a "Band-Aid." Marsha admits she used to eat when she was tired, bored, or angry. Now, when she feels like eating, she talks to herself, asking if she's truly hungry or if something else is bothering her. It makes sense: If you're not really hungry, you should try to figure out an alternative to eating, like taking a hot bath or going for a walk—something that will really make you feel better.

Change your "hot" thoughts to "cool" ones, when you're in a tempting food-related situation, says Dr. Nash. "Hot" thoughts focus on how good something would taste and how awful it would be if you couldn't have it. "Cool" thoughts, on the other hand, are more distanced, analytical ones that distract you from temptation. For instance, "It's not really worth it to eat that candy when I've made so much progress. Besides, I know what it tastes like and I can have it again some other day." Sometimes, it helps to wait for 10 minutes and see how you feel.

Avoid using negative, punitive words to describe yourself or your actions. "Stupid," "bad" and "cheat" are all no-nos. They only get in the way of feeling good about yourself and are usually way off base. After all, are you really a bad person just because you ate an extra piece of bread? Isn't "cheating" rather an extreme accusation if you go off your food plan? (Think about what it really means to cheat, say, on taxes or a school exam.) A more positive self-statement would be, "So I ate an extra slice of bread at dinner. I'll be more careful about my eating tomorrow."

Don't create self-fulfilling prophecies. If you tell yourself you'll always be overweight and that you're a failure, how can you ever hope for success? One woman who kept a self-statement diary found herself saying "I'll never lose weight. I lack self-discipline." She challenged it with "I can lose weight if I don't overeat." She acknowledged that the self-discipline accusation wasn't entirely true: "I complete my obligations on time." Then she rewarded herself with a trip to the library. Another time her negative self-statement was, "I'm fat and unattractive," which she countered with "I can be more attractive by wearing makeup and a nice dress."

Being more accepting of your body and yourself in general doesn't mean resignation to bad eating habits or inaction. Since you need your body, Dr. Nash stresses the need to take care of it. She sums it up nicely with, "You are not your body, but you are not separate from it either."

She feels that learning to feel good about yourself increases the likelihood that you'll be able to maintain new eating and exercise habits for a lifetime.

—by Anne Fletcher, M.S., R.D.

What Makes You Happy?

Look over the list below. Which items are most important to your own happiness? Rank them from 1 to 12. It will help you clarify what makes you the happiest. Let 1 be the item that is most important to you, and 12 be the item that is least important.

_____ Satisfying work life

_____ Active social life, friendships

_____ Loving relationship

_____ Looking attractive

_____ Good physical health

_____ Good emotional health

_____ Being successful

_____ Good sex life

_____ Nice home

_____ Peace of mind

_____ Personal growth

_____ Leisure time activities

Once you are clear on what is the most important to you, then you can focus your attention on pursuing the things that give you the greatest happiness.

Reprinted from *Emotional Health*, ©1985 by Rodale Press. Permission granted by Rodale Press, Inc.: Emmaus, PA 18098.

Competency 5.0

Understanding one's legal rights

5.01 Identify legal rights.
5.02 Describe the avenues to self-empowerment.

Competency 5.0
Overview

Single parents and displaced homemakers may find themselves suddenly faced with many different legal issues. They may have experienced the death of a spouse and are confronted with financial or estate-related problems. They may be in the process of a divorce and are overwhelmed by issues such as custody, child support enforcement, and property division. They may be faced with housing difficulties or problems and may not be aware of resources that could help them.

For these reasons, it is important that participants develop a working understanding of their basic legal rights with regard to divorce, housing, insurance, and other issues. Along with an understanding of their rights, participants must also learn how to assert these rights and become familiar with community and government resources that may assist them.

This competency addresses the areas of law that are of concern to single parents and displaced homemakers, as well as outlining ways to take advantage of legal rights. Participants completing Competency 5.0: Understanding One's Legal Rights will be able to:

5.01 Identify legal rights (divorce, custody, social security, consumer rights, housing, health insurance)
5.02 Describe the avenues to self-empowerment

Indicator 5.01 provides a broad array of information on various legal issues and rights. The next section, Indicator 5.02, more specifically addresses the means for "self-empowerment," or ways in which participants can assert their legal rights. This indicator also provides the instructor with an opportunity to invite speakers from community or government agencies to present on local legal resources.

Competency 5.0: Understanding One's Legal Rights

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
5.01 Identify legal rights	Lecture; discussion	*Harassment Under Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law; Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law*
	Lecture; discussion	*Fact Sheet on Pregnancy, Employment and the Law; Maternity Leave/Pregnancy Discrimination*
	Discussion	*Compensation for Injuries; Occupational Safety and Health; Women, Work and the Future: Public Policy for Working Women*
	Lecture; discussion	*Toward Economic Security*
	Lecture; discussion	*Alimony: All Things Considered for Fair Deal*
	Lecture; discussion	*Custody: It All Comes Down to the Best Interest of the Child*
	Lecture; discussion	*Support: The Child's Needs Versus the Parent's Ability to Pay*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
5.01 (continued)	Lecture; discussion	*Social Security*
	Discussion	*Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit*
5.02 Describe the avenues to self-empowerment	Lecture	*How Women Can Assert Their Job Rights*
	Lecture	*How To Care for Your Landlord*
	Discussion	*How To Assert Your Tenant Rights; Keeping a Rental File; Tenant Rights: How to Write a Letter*

Harassment Under Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law

What is it?
Webster's New World Dictionary defines harassment as the act of troubling, worrying or tormenting.

What is illegal harassment?
An employee may be troubled or worried many times in an employment setting. This harassment only becomes potentially illegal when an employer, supervisor or co-worker harasses a person because of that individual's race, sex, creed, marital status, color, age (40 and over), handicap, ancestry, sexual orientation, arrest or conviction record, or membership in the military reserve. These are protected bases or classes under the Wisconsin Fair Employment Law.

What isn't illegal harassment?
If an employer is just generally disagreeable or the work place is an unpleasant place for everyone, this may be harassment according to the dictionary but it is not covered under the Wisconsin Fair Employment Law.

What are the forms harassment takes?
Harassment includes any verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's membership in a protected class that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment or interferes with the individual's work performance.

Sexual harassment is a particular type of harassment to which either sex can be subjected. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwelcome physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature. Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature includes but is not limited to the deliberate, repeated making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate, repeated display of offensive sexually graphic materials which is not necessary for business

Reprinted from "Harassment Under Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law," Equal Rights Division, Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations.

purposes, in addition to request for sexual favors in exchange for continued employment or advancement.

What should employers do about harassment?
An employer has a positive responsibility to maintain a working environment free of harassment. Employers should make all employees aware of the fact that no harassment will be permitted, as well as establishing a procedure through which employees can make it known if harassment exists. Records should be kept of efforts to resolve any complaints.

What should an employee do if he/she is being harassed?
It is important to first make it known to the harasser that the behavior is unwelcome. If the behavior continues, the problem should be reported to the employer so that the employer has the opportunity to take corrective action. If the employer does not correct the problem, the employee may then file a complaint with:

Equal Rights Division
201 E. Washington Ave., Rm. 403
P.O. Box 8928
Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-6860

or

Equal Rights Division
819 North 6th Street
Room 255
Milwaukee, WI 53203
(414) 227-4384

Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law

For years, the Fair Employment Law has made it illegal for employers, unions, and licensing agencies to discriminate against job applicants or employees. However, not all kinds of discrimination are illegal. Employment discrimination may be illegal if employment related decisions such as:

- Hiring
- Promotion
- Discharge
- On-the-job harassment
- Determination of wages
- Determination of fringe benefits
- Granting of licenses
- Acceptance into membership

are made because of your:

- National Origin
- Race
- Creed (religion)
- Color
- Sex[**]
- Sexual Orientation
- Marital Status
- Age (if you are 40 or older)
- Handicap[*]
- Ancestry
- Arrest Record
- Conviction Record
- Membership in the Military Reserve

Also, certain kinds of honesty testing are prohibited, and the conditions under which an honesty test can be given are regulated.

It is also illegal for employers, unions, or licensing agencies to retaliate in any way against you because you have filed a discrimination complaint or assisted in the investigation of such a complaint. If retaliation occurs, you should notify the Equal Rights Division (DIHLR) immediately.

Reprinted from "Wisconsin's Fair Employment Law," Equal Rights Division, Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations.

---

[*] Unlawful handicap discrimination includes but is not limited to: Refusing to reasonably accommodate an employee's or prospective employee's handicap unless the employer can show that an accommodation would pose a hardship on their program or business.

[**] Unlawful sex discrimination includes but is not limited to: Engaging in sexual harassment, and discriminating against any woman on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, and maternity leave.

If your complaint appears to be covered by the Fair Employment Law, you can call or write for further information and a Discrimination Complaint Form:

Equal Rights Division
201 E. Washington Ave., Rm. 403
P.O. Box 8928
Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-6860

or

Equal Rights Division
819 North 6th Street
Room 255
Milwaukee, WI 53203
(414) 227-4384

The Equal Rights Division has the following fact sheets available at your request:

Pregnancy, Employment and the Law
Unfair Honesty Testing
Arrest and Conviction Records Under Wisconsin Law
What is Illegal Harassment
Avoiding Loaded Employment Application/Questions Which May Lead to Discrimination

Fact Sheet on Pregnancy, Employment and the Law

An underlying principle of all equal employment law is that applicants for employment and employees shall be treated equally regardless of age, race, creed, handicap, arrest or conviction records, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, sex or membership in the military reserves. This principle applies to pregnant employees.

Any procedure that treats pregnant females less favorably than other employees who have temporary disabilities is sex discrimination according to both state and federal laws.

It is illegal for an employer to use pregnancy as a reason to take any adverse personnel action that would not have been undertaken otherwise, including lay-off, reduced responsibilities or reduced pay. Wisconsin also requires some parents be allowed unpaid leave in connection with births and adoptions.

Here are the answers to some common questions about maternity benefits.

May an employer refuse to hire a woman because she is pregnant?

No. If the woman meets the qualifications required for the job, she may not be denied employment simply because she is pregnant.

Is a woman required to tell an employer, when she applies for a job, that she is pregnant?

No. She is not required to do so under either state or federal laws.

Reprinted from "Fact Sheet on Pregnancy, Employment and the Law," 1988, Wisconsin Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, Equal Rights Division.

May an employer ask a woman if she is pregnant or is planning on having children in the near future?

An employer may not ask a question that applies to only one group of applicants and not to another, if the only difference between the groups is a characteristic or status protected by the Fair Employment Law. Further the employer may not ask or use the information obtained from a question to discriminate against a person because of that person's membership in a protected category. Since only women may become pregnant and bear children, questioning about these matters can be discriminatory. The use of questions about an applicant's intent to have children may also be discriminatory, even if both men and women are asked.

What is an employer's obligation to an employee who is temporarily unable to perform her job because of pregnancy?

An employer is required to treat an employee unable to perform her job because of her pregnancy in the same manner as it treats other temporarily disabled employees, whether by providing modified tasks, alternative assignments, disability leaves or leaves without pay.

The employer should provide the same benefits to employees disabled by pregnancy as it provides to other temporarily disabled persons.

Additionally, employers with 50 or more permanent employees must allow covered employees up to six weeks of family leave in a 12-month period, without pay, for the birth of the employee's child if the leave begins within 16 weeks of the child's birth.

May an employer legally discipline or terminate a pregnant worker?

Yes. Any employee may be disciplined or terminated for cause. An employer may impose the same discipline on a pregnant employee as on all other employees. If a complaint is filed, no discrimination will be found, provided the employer can document that the discipline or termination was for willful neglect of job duties, or for failure to follow work rules that are enforced impartially on all employees.

May an employer discharge or discipline a woman because she has or is contemplating terminating a pregnancy?

No. An employer cannot discriminate in its employment practices against a woman because of any pregnancy-related conditions.

May an employer discharge, refuse to hire or discipline a woman because she is pregnant and not married?

No. An employer may not treat a pregnant employee any differently on the basis of her marital status. An employer must also provide maternity insurance benefits to employees without regard to the employee's marital status. Though this will not necessarily include coverage for a newborn child, an employer may not offer dependent coverage to some employees and not others on the basis of sex.

May an employer force an employee to take maternity leave at some arbitrary point in her pregnancy?

No. An employer may not force an employee to go on leave unless she is unable to perform the functions of her job. The timing and length of temporary disability leave should be determined between the employee and her doctor, as are other medical absences.

What if customers/co-workers are uncomfortable with a pregnant employee performing the job?

Co-worker or customer preference is not a valid reason for refusing to allow the pregnant employee to continue performing her job, if she is able.

Must an employer hold open the job of an employee who is absent on leave because she in temporarily disabled by a pregnancy-related condition?

A pregnant employee's job must be held open for her return on the same basis as jobs are held open for employees on sick or disability leave for other reasons.

If an employee is entitled to medical leave under the law and takes that medical leave in relation to a pregnancy, the returning employee must be reinstated to that employee's former position if it is vacant, or reinstated into an equivalent position with equivalent compensation, benefits, work shifts, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment if the former position is not vacant. This is also true as to both male and female employees who take family leave for bonding or child care time under the law.

What if an employee wants to be off work beyond the time she is physically disabled because of her pregnancy?

There is a clear distinction between *childbearing* leave and *child rearing* leave. Childbearing leave (when a doctor determines the woman is temporarily disabled) should be handled the same as other temporary leaves for medical reasons. When child rearing leave is granted by an employer, it should be available to both men and women and handled on the same basis as leave for any other nonmedical personal reason.

Employers with 50 or more permanent employees *must* allow covered employees up to six weeks of family leave in a 12-month period, without pay, for:

A. The birth of the employee's child if the leave begins within 16 weeks of the child's birth.

B. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption if the leave begins within 16 weeks of the child's placement.

What obligations do employers have with regard to the payment of maternity benefits?

Employers are required to provide disability coverage for pregnancy on the same basis as they provide it for any other condition. This means that both disability income protection and medical expense insurance must cover maternity-related disabilities and maternity-related health care expenses on the same basis as for all other conditions.

Any health insurance plan offered in connection with employment must cover maternity on the same basis as other conditions, whether or not the employer makes contributions to the plan. An employer that does not have any disability coverage for employees is not obligated to provide such coverage for maternity, but must still treat the pregnant employee in the same manner as other employees who are temporarily disabled.

If an employer employs 50 or more people on a permanent basis and the employee has been employed for the prior 52 weeks and worked at least 1000 hours during that period, the employee is entitled to unpaid leave under the law in connection with birth during any leave taken under the law. The employer must maintain the same group health insurance coverage for the employee as existed prior to the leave, with the same conditions that applied prior to the leave.

Is the employer required to pay part of a woman's salary while she is on a pregnancy disability leave?

No. The employer is required to pay only such benefits as are paid to employees who are on disability leaves due to reasons other than pregnancy.

May a union and employer enter into a health or disability insurance contract which excludes maternity benefits?

No. The union and employer are both subject to the Wisconsin Fair Employment Law and held accountable for entering into a discriminatory contract.

Can there be waiting periods before maternity coverage begins?

There can be the same waiting period before maternity coverage takes effect as there is for coverage of other health conditions.

If a pregnant employee leaves the job, does the employer have to pay maternity benefits?

If the benefits for other conditions are extended beyond the termination of employment, then benefits for maternity must be extended also. If benefits for other conditions end, they can end for maternity.

Must an employer provide health insurance coverage for the medical expenses of pregnancy-related conditions of the spouses of male employees? of the dependents of all employees?

When an employer provides no coverage for dependents, the employer is not required to begin such coverage. However, every group health insurance policy which provides coverage of dependent children and maternity coverage for any individual shall provide maternity coverage for dependent children. Wisconsin Insurance Commission rules require that *complications* of pregnancy be covered in all health insurance plans.

When an employer offers its employees a choice among several health insurance plans, must coverage for pregnancy-related conditions be offered in all of the plans?

Yes. Each of the plans must cover pregnancy-related conditions. An employee with a single coverage policy must receive coverage for her *own* pregnancy-related condition and not be forced to carry a family policy. However, a single person could be required to purchase a family policy in order to provide coverage for a child.

When an employee converts from the group medical coverage to an individual policy upon terminating employment, do the laws regarding discrimination apply to the individual policy?

Yes. A new conversion policy must be offered which provides the same coverage for pregnancy-related conditions as it provides for other medical conditions. If the coverage is reduced for all conditions, it may be reduced on the same basis for pregnancy-related conditions.

Is an employee who is unable to work because of pregnancy-related temporary disability eligible for worker's compensation?

No. Worker's compensation is available only to those persons who have a job-related illness or injury.

When might a pregnant employee be eligible for unemployment compensation?

A person is only eligible for unemployment compensation during the time she is physically able to work and available for work. If an employee was laid off during her pregnancy and unable to obtain other work, though available for work, she would be eligible for unemployment compensation until such time as she is hospitalized or otherwise unable to work.

What laws specifically apply to maternity benefits available to employees?

Both federal and state laws address the matter of maternity benefits. The Pregnancy Amendments of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the federal legislation.

One state law addressing maternity benefits is the Fair Employment Act (111.31—111.395, Wis. Stats.). Section 111.36 (1) (c) reads as follows:

"(1) Employment discrimination because of sex includes, but is not limited to any of the following actions by any employment, labor organization, employment agency, licensing agency or other person . . .

> (c) Discriminating against any woman on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, maternity leave or related medical conditions by engaging in any of the actions prohibited under s. 111.322, including, but not limited to, actions concerning fringe benefit programs covering illnesses and disability."

Wisconsin's Family and Medical Leave Law applies to employers with 50 or more permanent employees and employees of those employers who have been employed for the prior 52 weeks and have worked at least 1,000 hours during that period. For the employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the law takes effect on the day after the agreement expires or is extended or renewed.

Are insurance companies bound by these laws?

These laws apply only to employers. It is the employer's or union's responsibility to buy insurance policies which comply with the law. There is no comparable obligation on insurance companies. However, an insurance company would be wise to advise an employer/union-client of the legal obligations regarding maternity benefits.

Are there any differences in federal and state laws?

There are no differences in what is required in the federal and state discrimination laws in the treatment of pregnant employees by an employer. Federal discrimination law applies only to those employers with 15 or more employees.

Wisconsin's Fair Employment Act covers all employers in Wisconsin. Wisconsin's Family and Medical Leave Law applies to employers with 50 or more permanent employees.

Does it make any difference whether an employment-related maternity complaint is filed with the federal or the state fair employment agency?

As to claims of discrimination, not really. However, if a woman believes that she has been discriminated against because of her pregnancy, it is generally recommended that she file with both federal and state agencies to offer her maximum protection. There are some differences in the procedures followed by state and federal agencies when a complaint is filed. Attorney's fees are available through a successful action under both federal and state law.

Claims that the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act has been violated must be filed with the Wisconsin Equal Rights Division and cannot be filed with any federal agency.

What usually happens when an employment-related maternity complaint is filed with a fair employment agency?

Since case law and precedents in discrimination cases are now quite well established, the parties in pregnancy discrimination cases frequently achieve prompt settlements. The Wisconsin Equal Rights Division is also required to promptly resolve cases filed under the Family and Medical Leave Act even though that law is relatively new. An investigation establishes what treatment is given other employees with other kinds of temporary disabilities, the extent of the difference in the treatment of the pregnant employee and exactly what would be needed to make up the difference. Any difference that is found to exist may be translated into dollars and paid as part of a no fault settlement, or after a public hearing, by order of the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations. The employer may also be ordered to correct its practices.

Where should I go for further information?

If you have questions regarding maternity benefits in an employer-employee relationship, contact:

Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations

Madison Office
P.O. Box 8928
Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-6860

Milwaukee Office
Room 255
819 North Sixth Street
Milwaukee, WI 53203
(414) 227-4384

If you want more information about the federal regulations or wish to file a complaint under the Pregnancy Discrimination Amendments to the Civil Rights Act, you should contact:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 800
Milwaukee, WI 53203
(414) 291-1111

If you have an insurance problem and cannot get the answers you need from the agent or company involved, please contact:

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
123 West Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53702

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 7873
Madison, WI 53707
(608) 266-0103

Maternity Leave/Pregnancy Discrimination

Nora Satty was required to take leave of absence because of her pregnancy. When she returned to work she was given a temporary position, and was denied her accumulated seniority, with the result that she was unable to compete successfully for a permanent position in the company. Under company policy seniority was maintained during leaves of absence for disease or disability other than pregnancy. The Supreme Court held that the company policy violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it imposed a burden on women that was not imposed on men. Nashville Gas Co. *v.* Satty, *434 U.S. 136 (1977).*

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended in 1978 specifically prohibits discrimination because of pregnancy. Employers cannot refuse to employ a woman because of pregnancy or terminate her, force her to go on leave at an arbitrary point during pregnancy, or penalize her because of pregnancy in reinstatement rights—including credit for previous service, accrued retirement benefits, and accumulated seniority.

The law does not require an employer to provide a specific number of weeks for maternity leave, or to treat pregnant employees in any manner different from other employees with respect to hiring or promotions, or to establish new medical, leave, or other benefit programs where none currently exist.

The law requires that women affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions be treated the same for all employment-related purposes, including receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs, as persons not so affected but similar in their ability or inability to work. The amendment does not require employers to pay for health insurance benefits for abortions, except where the life of the mother would be endangered or where medical complications have arise from an abortion. On the other hand, it does not preclude employers from providing abortion benefits or otherwise affect bargaining agreements in regard to abortion. Employers may not fire or refuse to hire a woman simply because she has exercised her right to an abortion.

Pregnant workers in a number of States are entitled to benefits under statewide temporary disability insurance laws, special sections of fair employment or labor codes, and regulations or court decisions interpreting statutory bans on sex discrimination in employment. You can check with the department of labor or human or civil rights agencies for information about your rights to fringe benefits under State laws.

What To Do: If you think you are being treated unfairly because your temporary inability to work is due to pregnancy, you should contact the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission office that serves your area for information about your rights under Title VII.

Reprinted from *A Working Woman's Guide To Her Job Rights*, June 1988, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary, Women's Bureau.

Compensation for Injuries

Workers who are injured on the job or who contract an occupational disease may receive compensation under State workers' compensation laws. These laws provide for prompt payment of benefits to injured workers with a minimum of red tape and without the necessity of fixing the blame for the injury. In most States employers are required by law to cover their employees with workers' compensation protection, and heavy penalties are assessed for failure to comply with the law.

Since each State has its own law and operates its own system, the employees covered, the amount of compensation, duration of benefits, and procedures for making and settling claims vary widely. There are time limits within which notice of injury must be given to the employer, and failure to notify within the specified time will make a person ineligible for benefits. Benefits can include medical payments for the period of disability or for permanent disability, rehabilitation services, death benefits to a worker's family, and burial expenses. In some States a person can receive workers' compensation for disability caused by work-related stress, including stress related to alleged sexual discrimination. Compensation payments are generally financed through private insurance companies, State compensation funds, or self-insurance by employers. For more information about workers' compensation benefits and procedures, write to the State department of labor or industrial commission.

Federal workers and certain other workers are covered by Federal workers' compensation laws. The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs in the U.S. Department of Labor administers the Federal Employees Compensation Act, the Mine Safety and Health Act, and the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers Compensation Act. For information about these programs, contact the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210.

Reprinted from *A Working Woman's Guide To Her Job Rights,* June 1988, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary, Women's Bureau.

Occupational Safety and Health

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 is designed to ensure safe and healthful working conditions throughout the Nation. It covers every employer in a business affecting commerce, except where the workplace is covered under a special Federal law such as those for the mining and atomic energy industries. Federal employees are covered by an Executive order, and State and local government employees may be covered by the State, operating under a plan approved by the Federal Government. The law encourages States to operate occupational safety and health programs by providing grants for those whose plans demonstrate that the program can be "at least as effective" as the Federal program.

Under the general duty clause of the law, each employer must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor establishes standards which require conditions or the use of practices or methods necessary to protect workers on the job.

Since the Occupational Safety and Health Act was enacted in 1970, OSHA has adopted national consensus standards for more than 400 harmful physical agents and has issued proposed, final, or revised standards on acrylonitrile, inorganic arsenic, asbestos, benzene, 14 carcinogens, coke oven emissions, cotton dust, Dibromochloropropane (DBCP), ethylene dibromide, ethylene oxide, formaldehyde, lead, and vinyl chloride. Standards may set exposure limits and/or require conditions, or the adoption or use of one or more practices, means, methods or processes such as engineering controls or personal protective equipment reasonably necessary or appropriate to protect workers on the job. It is the employer's responsibility to become familiar and comply with the standards, to put them into effect, and to assure that employees have and use personal protective equipment required for safety and health.

Employees have a right:

- to request that OSHA conduct and inspection if they believe hazardous conditions or violations of standards exist in their workplace;
- to file a written request for an immediate inspection whenever they fear that an imminent danger is present in the workplace. If OSHA decides an inspection is necessary, they must notify the employee in writing;
- to refuse in good faith to expose themselves to a hazardous condition if there is no reasonable alternative. The condition must be of such a nature that, to a reasonable person, there is a real danger of death or

Reprinted from *A Working Woman's Guide To Her Job Rights*, June 1988, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary, Women's Bureau.

serious injury and there is not enough time to do away with the danger through the complaint process;
- to have an authorized employee representative accompany the OSHA representative during an inspection tour;
- to respond to questions from an OSHA inspector;
- to review employer information about job-related accidents and injuries at the workplace;
- to participate in establishing standards;
- to be advised by their employer of hazards, prohibited by the law, that exist at the workplace and of possible exposure to toxic or dangerous materials;
- to be notified of any citations issued against their employer.

Some of the potential health hazards of jobs in which large numbers of women are employed are: organic solvents found in stencil machines, correction fluids, and rubber cement, and ozone from copying machines (clerical workers); cotton dust, skin irritants, and chemicals (textile and apparel workers); hair, nail, and skin beauty preparations (hairdressers and beauticians); heat, heavy lifting, and chemicals (launderers and dry cleaners); solvents and acids (electronics workers); infectious diseases, heavy lifting, radiation, skin disorders, and anesthetic gases (hospital and other health care workers); and biological agents, flammable, explosive, toxic, or carcinogenic substances, exposure to radiation, and bites and allergies from research animals (laboratory workers).

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued a hazard communication standard which requires manufacturing employers to provide information to their employees about hazardous chemicals they are exposed to in the workplace. Several cities and States have enacted laws requiring manufacturing and nonmanufacturing employers to inform their employees about any toxic substances they are exposed to at the workplace. The National Labor Relations Board has also ruled that unions who request them must be given the names of chemicals and other substances the workers they represent are exposed to in the workplace.

Reports to OSHA from workers indicate that a number of major corporations are adopting or expanding policies that exclude women of childbearing age and pregnant women from jobs involving potential exposure to certain toxic substances because of possible fetal damage. Some courts have ruled that employers violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when they fail to consider acceptable alternatives that would accomplish the employer's business purpose with a less discriminatory impact.

What To Do: If you believe unsafe or unhealthful conditions exist in your workplace, you or your representative can file a complaint requesting an inspection. If there is a poster about the State or Federal health and safety law at your workplace, your complaint should be filed with the indicated agency. If there is no poster, the complaint should be filed with OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 20210). OSHA will withhold names of complainants upon request. If you have been discharged or otherwise discriminated against in any way for exercising your rights under this law, you may file a discrimination complaint with OSHA within 30 days of the discriminatory action.

If you are concerned about the health effects of exposure to a given substance or working conditions, a request may be made to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to conduct a health hazard evaluation at your workplace.

A request for a health hazard evaluation should be addressed to NIOSH, Hazard Evaluation and Technical Assistance Branch, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226.

Fact Sheet
Women, Work and the Future: Public Policy for Working Women

Public policy can improve the economic status of women and families. The following are federal legislative initiatives. Many states have also acted to implement these policies.

FAMILY AND CAREER SUPPORT POLICIES

- **Family and Medical Leave:** mandates unpaid leave for workers for birth, adoption, or illness of a parent or child and unpaid medical leave for personal reasons.
- **Child Care:** increases the supply, subsidizes the cost and improves the quality of child care for low- and moderate-income families, as well as providing training for day care workers.
- **Long-Term Care:** provides long-term care for the elderly, including provision for adult day care.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES

- **Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act:** includes specific funding set-asides for sex equity and programs to serve single parents and homemakers.
- **Job Training Partnership Act:** provides for job training services to youth and economically disadvantaged individuals.
- **Family Support Act:** the new welfare law includes the JOBS employment and training program for welfare recipients.
- **Adult Education Act:** includes provisions for workplace literacy and partnerships between business and community-based organizations.

INCOME AND BENEFITS POLICIES

- **Minimum Wage Restoration:** raises the minimum wage in increments over a period of years and establishes a Minimum Wage Review Board.
- **Pay Equity:** requires the executive branch to conduct a pay equity study and to promote techniques to eliminate sex- and race-based wage discrimination.
- **Part-Time and Temporary Workers Protection:** provides part-time and temporary workers a *pro rata* share of pension and health insurance benefits.
- **Minimum Health Benefits:** mandates employers of a certain size or greater to provide minimum health insurance coverage for employees.

Reprinted from National Commission on Working Women of Wider Opportunities for Women, 1325 G St., NW, Lower Level, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Toward Economic Security

A divorce tells society that a marriage has failed. That is not to say, though, that the divorce process itself cannot turn out well, at least on an economic level.

In broad terms, a successful divorce process is one from which both former spouses emerge with an acceptance of their loss, with economic security, and with the ability and desire to move ahead with their lives. If there are children, their parents' successful divorce is additionally one from which the children emerge emotionally healthy, financially protected, and able to freely benefit from the love and support of two caring parents.

To achieve this success, both spouses must participate in a meaningful way in the divorce process. It can't become an event that happens *to* you: It must be seen as a process of transition that you guide, even if you wish that it weren't happening.

With respect to finances, this participation has two aspects. The first involves assessing your financial resources and needs, monitoring your expenses, and setting goals for your future. The second involves your husband or wife.

Since the economic terms of your divorce will probably be determined through negotiations with your spouse, a good relationship with him or her during the process is crucial. This is not to suggest or condone emotional manipulation or deception in divorce negotiations. But it is true that when spouses in the throes of divorce demonstrate sensitivity and respect for each other, prospects for successful negotiations leading to a beneficial economic settlement are enhanced. In this sense, how you deal with the divorce process will have a significant impact on the quality of your life long after the divorce itself.

Reprinted from Thomas A. Bishop, "Toward Economic Security," *Family Advocate,* Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

Categorizing expenses
An effective lawyer will help a client participate fruitfully in the divorce process. At an early stage in the legal process you may be given a packet of forms to complete. These may include a description and itemization of living expenses, a balance sheet for the listing of assets and liabilities, and a marital-history questionnaire. The lawyer needs this information to effectively advocate for a divorce client. Equally important, in many cases, is the direct benefit to the client of completing these forms.

Consider the value of categorizing and enumerating your living expenses. During marriage it is common for one spouse to routinely handle the family expenses while the other has only a general knowledge of them. Or, one spouse may pay the day-to-day expenses, while the other pays such major expenses as taxes, mortgage payments, and household improvements. In such a family, neither spouse has a complete understanding of the family's finances.

After a divorce, however, each former spouse must maintain a separate household and will be responsible for meeting all expenses. For many, this will require tighter budgeting or closer monitoring of expenses than during marriage. Filling out the expense form may be the first step for the financially unaware spouse to become knowledgeable. Old bills and check registers may have to be reviewed; perhaps phone calls to utility companies or other service providers will have to be made. Viewed in this light, completion of the living-expenses form is a learning experience for the divorcing spouse and not merely an aid to the lawyer.

Frequently the expense form is completed early in the legal process. At this juncture, however, you may be uncertain of your expenses. The history of certain bills can not always predict future expenditures. For example, it may be difficult to predict the cost of maintaining a new household shared by the children only periodically. During the divorce process, actual expenses should be compared periodically with earlier projections to determine their accuracy. See sample monthly budget summary sheet.

Your lawyer may also ask you to complete a form called a balance sheet, which is a statement of assets and liabilities. As with expenses, many spouses have only a limited knowledge during marriage of the couple's financial condition. A spouse who completes a balance sheet is more likely to understand the nature and value of the couple's assets and liabilities than the client who turns over this responsibility to someone else. Of course, some of this information may not be readily available. If assets are not owned jointly, for example, your lawyer may have to get information about these assets through the legal process of discovery.

The marital history

Many lawyers ask their clients to complete written personal and marital histories. You may be asked to complete a questionnaire or to write a history in narrative form. Your lawyer needs this kind of information in order to advocate for you and advise you. Information relating to your educational background or employment history, for example, may have a bearing on your entitlement to receive or obligation to pay spousal maintenance or alimony.

Frequently lawyers will ask their clients to include such background information about their spouse. This is because the obligation to pay or receive spousal support is often measured in relative terms based on a comparison of the economic circumstances of the spouses. Comparative background information is also relevant to the question of asset distribution. Similarly, you may be asked such background questions pertaining to your relative participation in acquiring and maintaining assets, or past inheritances, or the likelihood of receiving them in the future.

In some states, you may be asked questions about the cause of the divorce. Your lawyer will ask for all information that relates to the legal criterion for deciding any of the issues to be resolved in your divorce.

If you have been asked to complete a marital-history questionnaire or to write a narrative of your marriage, don't try to finish the task in one sitting. While the primary purpose of developing this information is to inform your lawyer, the effort brings about greater clarity, focus, and purpose for the writer. For nearly all who complete this task, the collection and recitation of this information is emotionally painful.

The process takes time
The legal process of divorce consumes more time in some states than others; typically it spans several months. During this time the lawyers gather information from and about their clients and exchange financial data. Clients and lawyers meet periodically to discuss the status of their cases, to exchange information, and to formulate proposals. These meetings constitute perhaps your most vital interaction with the legal process. It would be wise for you to prepare yourself. For example, in advance of these meetings, note any questions that occur to you. At your conference or shortly afterward, record the answers you get. Your notes may also serve as a useful place to record information you wish to convey to your lawyer before the meeting.

While your lawyer will advise you and advocate on your behalf, his or her success will depend largely not only on the accuracy and completeness of the historical information you provide, but also on a thorough understanding of your financial needs and goals. Moreover, you can enhance the likelihood of financial success in your divorce by planning for your postdivorce financial vitality. For example, if you are the spouse who has had the primary responsibility for the daily care of your children, and that responsibility has prevented your entry or re-entry into outside employment, you will probably be advised by your lawyer to consider what outside employment situation, if any, you would like to enter into after the divorce, and when.

Employment counseling or a survey of available educational programs may be called for. Once you have set a goal, develop a strategic plan. The plan may include consideration of the costs of further education, of day care, or of other expenses that may accompany a job. As you consult with your lawyer about your strategic plan, you may wish to discuss whether you goals appear to be attainable under your circumstances.

Successful negotiations

A beneficial financial outcome to the divorce process depends, too, on the completion of successful negotiations. While your lawyer, as your advocate, may assume leadership in this process, you have an important collaborative role as an advisor to your lawyer. There is a significant psychological component to the process of divorce negotiations.

Apprise your lawyer of your spouse's state of mind. A spouse who is grief-stricken, angry, or confused about a marital failure is often not emotionally inclined or ready to make the assessments and develop the planning that economic success in divorce requires. A spouse who is in this state of mind cannot be expected to make a comprehensive divorce-settlement proposal that is reasonable. Such a proposal, born of anger or grief, is unlikely to be realistic, and once made, could present a significant obstacle to later agreement. It can be difficult for a spouse who makes an emotionally-based proposal to withdraw or significantly amend it without losing face.

Timing of settlement gestures and proposals is crucial. Social scientists and researchers have written that divorce, as a psychological process, may entail several phases. At the onset one experiences anger or denial, then grief. Feelings of acceptance and consolidation emerge later, coupled with the ability and desire to bargain with one's future. While these stages follow no predictable time line or fixed sequence, it is valuable for divorcing spouses and their lawyers to recognize the connection between the psychological phases of divorce and the timing of divorce negotiations.

Since spouses are often not at the same psychological stage, a spouse who has accepted the eventuality of the divorce and whose attention has turned to the future must be sensitive to the readiness of his or her spouse to bargain. An objectively reasonable proposal made to a distraught or angry spouse is unlikely to provoke agreement; indeed, its terms may merely provide the platform or starting point for even greater demands by the emotionally unsettled spouse. In such a case, a wise lawyer may counsel his or her client to defer settlement negotiations for a reasonable period in the anticipation that the other spouse will in time become ready for rational negotiations.

Negotiation behavior

The course of the divorce process will be influenced by many factors, including the behavior of each spouse during this fragile time. In divorce negotiations, as in any bargaining, the participants make demands and concessions based on their perceptions of their needs and entitlements. A bargainer's perception will be influenced not only by data, but also by his or her interpretation of it. If your spouse, therefore, perceives that you are saddened by the marital failure and the impending divorce, and concerned for his or her welfare, his or her bargaining stance is likely to be more balanced than if he or she feels abandoned by an uncaring mate. Again, this is a prescription not for dishonesty, but for awareness and sensitivity.

The legal system has criteria for decision making in regard to all the economic issues in divorce—child support, education and health care, spousal maintenance, asset and liability allocation, and the payment of fees and expenses. Because the relative importance of these criteria varies from state to state, they should be discussed with your lawyer. Regardless of the criteria, however, they cannot be applied in a vacuum. The better you and your lawyer understand your financial needs and resources, the more concrete and farsighted your financial plans and goals, and the more sensitive negotiations are to the emotional and psychological aspects of divorce, the better your chances for a divorce judgment that reflects your economic goals for life after divorce.

Checklist of Financial Issues

The items below are not intended to be exhaustive, but a stimulus for consultation with your lawyer.

Child support

1. Amount of periodic obligation.
2. When it must be paid.
3. Whether, and, if so, under what circumstances will the amount be subject to change.
4. Duration of the obligation to pay child support.
5. What expenses child support is intended to cover.
6. Who pays for the "extras" such as summer camp, music lessons, etc.?
7. Whether the amount of child support will be reduced or suspended during periods of visitation.
8. Who pays for the costs of transportation if one of the parents relocates?
9. If one parent remarries, do either the earnings of the new spouse or the expenses of the "new" family have any impact on the amount of child support to be paid?
10. What security can be provided to assure the timely payment of child support?

Education

1. Does the court have the authority to require either parent to pay for private, special, secondary or post-secondary educational expenses and, if so, under what circumstances?
2. What categories of expenses are generally included in the calculation of education costs?

3. What right should either parent have to participate in the selection of a child's school?
4. If college expenses are contemplated, should they include expenses for a trade or vocational school not necessarily leading to the award of a degree?

Health care

1. What are the terms of the health-care insurance intended to cover the children?
2. For how long will the children continue to be covered?
3. Who will be responsible for those health-care costs either not covered by insurance or less than the insurance deductible?
4. Will either parent be entitled to decide unilaterally to incur nonemergency health-care expenses for the children?
5. What provision is made to ensure that the parent who pays health-care expenses will be reimbursed by the insurance carrier?

Spousal support or alimony

1. What are the criteria for an award of periodic or lump-sum spousal support or alimony?
2. If periodic alimony is to be paid, when is it due and under what circumstances may it be modified, suspended, or terminated (e.g., what is the impact of cohabitation or employment on the receipt of periodic alimony)?
3. What security can be provided to assure the payment of alimony?
4. If the amount of alimony is tied to the earnings of either spouse, what access should each spouse have to the financial records of the other?
5. How much money should be set aside to pay the income tax on alimony?

Property division

1. Real estate
    a. If to be conveyed, what form of deed should be used?
    b. Who will be liable for the payment of expenses associated with the real estate before and after the conveyance?

2. Retirement funds
    a. In what form are these funds—pension, profit-sharing, IRA, etc.?
    b. Will the nonemployee spouse receive a share of the retirement benefits at the time of the divorce or upon the retirement of the employee-spouse?
    c. Will the nonemployee spouse be entitled to receive any retirement funds upon the death of the employee spouse?
    d. Will provision for the distribution of retirement assets be as a form of alimony or property settlement?
3. Household furnishings—What criterion should be used for dividing them?
4. Savings and checking accounts, certificates of deposit and brokerage accounts—How will they be divided and/or closed; who will be responsible for the payment of taxes on interest or dividends earned while jointly held?
5. Automobiles or other assets that may be held as security for liabilities—What documents are necessary to ensure that *both* the assets and the corresponding liabilities are allocated?
6. Life insurance—should either spouse be obliged to maintain insurance on his or her life? Who will be the policy owner; who will be the beneficiary; will the owner be able to borrow against the policy; how long must it remain in force?

Liabilities

1. What are the individual and joint debts of the spouses?
2. Who will be responsible for the payment of each and what will be the consequences for failure to pay?
3. Is the assumption of a liability part of a property settlement or intended as a form of spousal support?
4. What provisions have been made to assure that each spouse will continue to enjoy the credit rating to which he or she is entitled?
5. To what extent is either spouse liable for debts incurred by the other during the marriage,

during marital separation, and after the divorce?

6. Who will be responsible for the payment of attorney's fees and costs of litigation associated with the divorce?

Tax matters

1. Who will be entitled to claim the children as dependency exemptions and under what conditions?
2. What payments are intended to qualify as alimony so as to entitle the payor to deduct them and to require the recipient to declare them as income for income-tax purposes?
3. What is the tax impact on an agreement to pay the debts of one's spouse?
4. If retirement funds are to be allocated, is the resulting division a form of alimony or property settlement? What are the tax consequences of any transfers of retirement assets?
5. What is the capital-gains tax impact on the transfer of assets from one spouse to another?

Toward Economic Security: Example 1
Sample Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Your Name ______________________
Date ______________________

Financial Statement

	Per Pay Period	Per Month
I. INCOME		
A. Gross Income From Salary and Wages (including commissions, allowances and overtime)		
Is pay period:		
weekly ___ biweekly ___ monthly ___	$ ________	$ ________
Deductions:		
Withholding	$ ________	
F.I.C.A.	$ ________	
Other (medical or other insurance,	$ ________	
pension, stock plans, union dues, etc.)	$ ________	
Total	$ ________	$ ________
Net Income From Employment	$ ________	$ ________

NOTE: To arrive at monthly income figure, if paid weekly, multiply weekly income by 4.3. If paid every other week, multiply biweekly total by 2.15.

B. Other Income (Include pensions, Social Security, disability, unemployment insurance, public assistance, rents, child support from previous marriage, voluntary payments from present spouse, etc.)

1. Source of income: ______________________

____

____

2. Gross Income Per Month	$ ________
3. Deductions:	$ ________

______________________ ________
______________________ ________
______________________ ________

Total Deductions	
4. Net Income Per Month	$ ________
C. Total Monthly Net Income—All Sources (Total A and B)	$ ________

Reprinted from Thomas A. Bishop, "Toward Economic Security," *Family Advocate*, Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

II. ASSETS

A. Real Estate

Held in Name of ____________________
Home: Address ____________________
____
Value (estimate) $ ________
Mortgage Balance $ ________
Equity $ ________
Other: Address ____________________
____
Value (estimate) $ ________
Mortgage $ ________
Equity $ ________

* List mortgage balance also under liabilities. List the amount of your monthly mortgage *payment* only under LIABILITIES (Section III, following page).

B. Motor Vehicles

Registered in Name of ____________
Year _____ Model ________ Value $ ________
Loan Balance $ ________
Equity $ ________ $ ________
Year _____ Model ________ Value $ ________
Loan Balance $ ________
Equity $ ________ $ ________

C. Other Personal Property—Such as home computers, jewelry, household furnishing, etc.

____________________ ________
____________________ ________
____________________ ________
Total Value $ ________

D. Savings—List Name of Bank, Account Number and Amount in Account, including CD's, money markets, passbook accounts, etc.

____________________ ________
____________________ ________
____________________ ________
Total Value $ ________

E. Insurance (exclude children)

Insured	Company	Face Amount	Cash Value
			$
			$
			$
	Total Cash Value (less loans)		$

F. All Other Assets

________________________________ $ ________

________________________________ $ ________

________________________________ $ ________

Total Value $ ________

G. TOTAL ALL ASSETS $ ________

III. LIABILITIES (Include mortgage, car loan, credit cards, personal loans)

A.	Creditor	Whose Name(s)	Current Balance Due	Monthly Payment	Who Pays

B. TOTAL LIABILITIES $ ________

IV. SUMMARY

A. Total Monthly Net Income (All Sources) $ ________

B. Total Cash Value of All Assets $ ________

C. Total Liabilities $ ________

D. Total Monthly Expenses $ ________

E. Retirement Plan—Profit Sharing, Pension Plan, Keogh Plan, Annuity, IRA, Employee Stock Option, etc.

Name of Company ________________________

Name of Plan ________________________

Identification No. ________________________

Ownership ________________________

Value ________________________

Vested Interest ________________________

(Continue with additional information under "All Other Assets")

F. Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds

No. of Shares	Company	Value

Toward Economic Security: Example 2
Sample Living Expense Form

I. HOUSING	MONTHLY
Mortgage	
Real Property Taxes Included in Mortgage? yes ____ no ____ Annual $ ______	
Insurance on House—fire and liability Annual $ ______	
Rent	
Water	
Electric	
Gas and Oil	
Wood for Heat (No. of cords/yr @ $ ____)	
Telephone	
Garbage Collection	
Household Maintenance—repair, plumbing, electrical, annual furnace cleaning, etc.	
Yard Maintenance—lawn care, snow plowing, etc.	
Cable TV	
TOTAL	

II TAXES, INSURANCE	MONTHLY
Personal Property Taxes Annual Amount $ _____	
Life Insurance for Self Quarterly Amount $ _____	
TOTAL	

III. FOOD	MONTHLY
Groceries, Meats, Fish, Dairy Products, Cleaning Products, Etc. Weekly $ _____	
Restaurant expenses with children	
Restaurant expenses with friends	
TOTAL	

IV. MEDICAL AND DENTAL	MONTHLY
List approximate expenses for each child and self	
Medical Insurance Premium* Annual $ _____	
*List if not a payroll deduction and you are paying this. _____	
Dental Insurance Premium Annual $ _____	
Out-of-Pocket Expenses: doctor's bills, prescriptions, medications, dentist, orthodontist	
TOTAL	

Reprinted from Thomas A. Bishop, "Toward Economic Security," *Family Advocate*, Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

V. CLOTHING

		MONTHLY
Clothing for Self	Annual $ _____	
Clothing for Children	Annual $ _____	
Dry Cleaning/laundry		
	TOTAL	

VI. PERSONAL AND MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

	MONTHLY
Newspapers and stationery	
Shoe repairs	
Toys, books, records	
Barber	
Hairdresser	
Care of Pets	
TOTAL	

VII. CAR

		MONTHLY
Car Payments		
Gas and Oil		
Tolls and parking		
License		
Automobile insurance	Annual $ _____	
Repairs	Annual $ _____	
Lubrication, oil and anti-freeze		
	TOTAL	

VIII. EXPENSES FOR CHILDREN

		MONTHLY
Sitters/Day Care	Weekly $ _____	
School tuition and Transportation	Annual $ _____	
Insurance at school		
Sports Activities		
Special Lessons		
Entertainment—movies, trips, parties		
	TOTAL	

IX. CHARITIES AND DUES

		MONTHLY
Local club membership and dues	Weekly $ _____	
List charitable contributions and church contributions:	Annual $ _____	
	TOTAL	

X. ENTERTAINMENT, TRAVEL AND VACATIONS

	MONTHLY
Vacation Annual $ _____	
Trips, Personal Travel	
Other Entertainment	
TOTAL	

XI. GIFTS

	MONTHLY
Christmas presents Annual $ _____	
Birthday presents	
Other	
TOTAL	

Alimony: All Things Considered for a Fair Deal

In recent years, the legal profession and the public have increasingly recognized the importance of alimony for women's economic security. Yet fewer than 15 percent of all divorced or separated women have an alimony agreement or court order. What can be done to ensure that spouses who need and deserve support receive an adequate award?

In most states, statutes or case law set out a list of considerations for determining postdivorce alimony. (Texas does not permit courts to order postdivorce alimony.) Factors commonly include the age and health of the parties; length of the marriage; marital standard of living; standards of living after divorce; distribution of property; homemaker services; and contributions to the other spouse's education or increased earning power.

Also, the dependent spouse's earning ability (including length of absence from the job market, and time and expense for education and training to gain suitable employment) and parental responsibilities; tax consequences; ability to pay; needs of the parties; conduct of the parties during marriage; and any other factors the court deems just and equitable.

The same or similar factors figure into awarding temporary alimony, known as alimony *pendente lite,* designed to support the dependent spouse during the divorce action at the same level as during the marriage. Some jurisdictions have numerical guidelines for setting temporary alimony.[1]

Need and ability to pay

The wife's ability to support herself is the primary focus of many alimony decisions. Sex and age discrimination are crucial to understanding this factor. Women earn an average 64 percent of what

Reprinted from Sally F. Goldfarb, "Alimony: All things considered for a fair deal," *Family Advocate,* Winter 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

men earn, and most employed women are in traditionally female occupations—such as clerical work and retail sales—with low pay and little chance for advancement. Women even earn less than men in the same profession, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (Although alimony is gender-neutral, this article focuses on women because they are the overwhelming majority of recipients.)

With a history of part-time or temporary jobs, or skills long unused, many "displaced homemakers" cannot find a full-time, permanent position. A log of the wife's unsuccessful job applications can be very effective in an alimony case.

The husband's income level is also significant in determining an alimony award. Counsel for the wife should use discovery to identify such perks as fringe benefits, expense accounts, and deferred compensation. If the husband has intentionally reduced his income, be prepared to document his bad faith and the additional income to be imputed to him.

Because the husband's ability to pay is often related to his needs, examine his projected budget carefully for padding. Any luxuries allowed as "needs" in his budget should similarly be allowed in hers.

The wife's contribution
A familiar case is one where the wife gave up education or training to help put her husband through professional school, only to be greeted with divorce soon after he graduates. Some courts have devised awards of "reimbursement alimony" to compensate.[2] Others have reimbursed the marital pot for the husband's educational expenses; reimbursed the wife for financial and household contributions; or—less often—divided the professional degree or license as property.[3]

Women's contributions as homemakers should be recognized in alimony.[4] The typical wife still assumes primary responsibility for child care and household tasks, whether employed or not, and thus frees up her husband to concentrate on his job while her earning power is reduced. Alimony should redress the resulting disparity in earning potentials.[5]

Standard of living

Alimony law no longer reflects the belief that a woman is automatically entitled to live in the style to which she has become accustomed. The standard of living during marriage is nonetheless an important alimony factor.[6]

State and national studies have found that men's average standards of living rise after divorce while women's fall. Inadequate alimony is a major reason.[7] The mean amount of alimony received by women in 1985 was only $3,733, according to the Census Bureau. Comparing what the two spouses' standards of living will be after divorce is therefore an effective approach for alimony cases.

Standards of living can be quantified and compared by using such methods as the federal poverty standard or the Bureau of Labor Statistics Revised Equivalence Scale.[8] When it is impossible for both spouses to continue the marital standard of living, alimony should be awarded so that both parties share the reduction.[9]

The role of fault

Marital fault has been excluded from alimony decisions in 29 states. Despite the widespread adoption of "no-fault" grounds for divorce, a finding of fault bars alimony in eight other states and may be considered in alimony decisions in 11 states and the District of Columbia.

Property and child support

Traditionally, property division was seen as a way to distribute previously-acquired assets, and alimony was supposed to provide support by sharing future income. This distinction is no longer clear-cut. Alimony may be legally unavailable, forcing the economically dependent spouse to rely on property for support. Conversely, alimony can be used as a vehicle to divide the marital assets.

When a couple has substantial assets and the chief wage earner is unreliable or has erratic income, the dependent spouse may prefer property division to alimony. Property awards generally cannot be modified, an advantage if the wife plans to remarry. Yet the husband's future income usually is far more valuable than the couple's property.

Some alimony statutes include the property award as a factor. Counsel for the wife should argue that it is unjust to expect her to use her share of the property for support if the husband is not expected to.

It may be easier in many instances to obtain child support than alimony, and tax considerations may make child support more attractive to the recipient. Yet the average child-support payment falls far short of meeting the children's expenses and provides no support for the mother. Often inadequate spousal support forces the entire custodial household to reduce its standard of living. Child support also typically terminates when the child is emancipated or reaches the age of majority, regardless of the custodian's continuing needs.

Modification, termination

Permanent alimony, until recently the most common type of spousal support, can be modified by showing a relevant change in circumstances. Most state laws say the change must be substantial, continuing, and not contemplated at the time the award was entered.

Alimony terminates in most jurisdictions when the recipient remarries. Termination is automatic in some states, whereas in others the payor must move for modification. The prevailing rationale for this rule is that a woman is not entitled to be supported by two men at the same time. This assumes that the only purpose of alimony is to continue the former husband's duty of support and fails to recognize other legitimate functions of alimony, such as meeting the wife's financial needs and compensating her for contributions to the former spouse.

The recipient's cohabitation will lead to modification in most states only with proof that her financial needs have changed; in a few states, cohabitation is automatically a ground for termination. Alimony terminates in many states when either party dies, unless the agreement provides otherwise.

Inflation has a powerful effect on the value of alimony. In some jurisdictions, alimony awards can include an automatic escalation clause tied to changes in the cost of living and/or the payor's income.[10]

Types of alimony

The early eighties saw a dramatic increase in rehabilitative alimony—short-term alimony designed to make the wife get a job and become self-supporting. At least half the states permit or require rehabilitative awards, but there are signs that the trend toward short-term awards is waning. Appellate courts are increasingly willing to overturn time limits on alimony.[11]

Minnesota, New Hampshire, and New York recently amended their statutes to expand access to permanent awards. The lawyer for the recipient of a time-limited award should ask the court to retain jurisdiction to permanent modification.

Rehabilitative alimony, alimony in gross, lump-sum alimony, and reimbursement alimony may be subject to special rules regarding modification and termination.

Enforcement

Getting an alimony award is half the battle: Census figures show that only 73 percent of women entitled to alimony in 1985 received all or part of it.

Methods of enforcing alimony awards include contempt, execution, garnishment, wage or income assignment, attachment, liens, and requiring security. Interstate procedures include the Revised Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (RURESA).

In cases involving both alimony and child support, state and local child-support enforcement agencies may be an alternative to private enforcement.[12]

Tax and bankruptcy

Alimony payments are federal income-tax deductions for the payor and must be included as income to the recipient.[13] Though this rule provides a tax incentive for shifting income from the higher-earning to the lower-earning former spouse, the tax burden may make alimony less valuable to the recipient than it appears. If both spouses are in the same tax bracket, the recipient will have to spend one additional tax dollar for every tax dollar the payor saves by designating payments as alimony.

Under a proposal endorsed by the ABA, alimony and child support could be combined into a "family support" payment that would be deductible to the payor and taxable for the payee. This proposal would impose even greater liability on most women after divorce and would erode the value of child-support awards under recently-enacted guidelines.

Under federal bankruptcy law, alimony and child support—unlike property division—are generally not dischargeable.[14]

Conclusion

Many litigants—and even some lawyers—think that alimony is appropriate only when the husband earns a high salary and the wife is incapable of finding a job. Actually, under the statutes and case law of most states, the average wife is eligible for alimony to meet financial needs and compensate for contributions to her husband's earning power.

---

[2] *Mahoney v. Mahoney*, 91N.J. 488, 453 A. 2d 527 (1982).

[3] *O'Brien v. O'Brien*, 66 N.Y. 2d 576, 489 N.E. 2d 712 (1985); *Haugan b. Haugan*, 117 Wis. 2d 200 343 N.W. 2d 796 (1984); Ca. Civ. Code § 4800.3.

[4] See, e.g., Cal. Civ. Code § 4801 (a)(1)(b); Fla. Stat. Ann. § 61.08 (2)(f); Or. Rev. Stat. § 107.105 (1)(d)(C), (F).

[5] *In re Marriage of LaRocque*, 139 Wis. 2d 23, 406 N.W. 2d 736 (1987).

[6] Cal. Civ. Code § 4801 (a); Minn. Stat. Ann. § 518.552 (1); N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 236 Pt. B. 6(a).

[7] See, e.g., L. Weitzman, *The Divorce Revolution* 339 (1985).

[8] See Smith, "Grounds for Deviation," 10 Fam. Advoc. 22 (Spring 1988).

[9] *Weir v. Weir*, 374 N.W. 2d 858, 864 (N.D. 1985); *In re Marriage of LaRocque, supra.*

[10] See annot., 19 A.L.R. 4th 830 (1983 & Supp. 1988).

[11] Krauskopf, "Rehabilitative Alimony: Uses and Abuses of Limited Duration Alimony," 21 Fam. L.Q. 573 (1988).

[12] See Dodson, "The Relationship Between Child Support and Alimony," 4 J. Amer. Acad. Matrimonial Law. 25, 54-55 (1988)

[13] 26 U.S.C. §§ 71, 215.

[14] 11 U.S.C. § 523 (a)(5).

Custody: It All Comes Down to the Best Interest of the Child

Custody and visitation are determined according to the "best interest of the child." The manner in which this standard is interpreted varies from state to state and from judge to judge, but there are many common principles that will be outlined in this chapter. Also to be discussed: joint custody, out-of-state moves with the child, the rights of third parties, and the use of mediation in resolving custody disputes.

Factors considered

Tender years doctrine. In legal theory, mothers and fathers have an equal right to custody of the children. The tender years doctrine by which mothers were automatically entitled to custody unless they were unfit has been abolished in all states, although a few states (mostly in the South) will give a legal preference to the mother if all factors are considered equal or if the children are of preschool age. The hearts of individual judges may be slower to change than the law—some judges apply an automatic preference for a parent based on the sex of the parent or child. If the judge does not explicitly reveal bias, a decision based on improper factors might be upheld on appeal.

Primary caretaker. The parent who has been the primary caretaker has a significant advantage in a custody dispute, particularly when the child is young. Two states (West Virginia and Minnesota) require that the primary caretaker be given custody as long as he or she is fit and the child is not old enough to express a cogent, contrary preference. When a child is older or when both parents are actively involved in the day-to-day raising of the child, the factor of which parent is the primary caretaker is less important.

Sexual conduct of the parties. The majority rule is that a parent's nonmarital conduct is not a factor against custody for that parent unless the evidence

Reprinted from Jeff Atkinson, "Custody: It all comes down to the best interest of the child," *Family Advocate,* Winter 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

clearly shows harm to the the child or a high likelihood of harm. A long-term, stable nonmarital relationship usually is not a basis for denying custody; a series of short-term relationships that make the child uneasy is more negative. Homosexual relationships are not an automatic basis for denying custody in most states, but a homosexual parent seeking custody has a de facto burden of showing a particularly good parent-child relationship.

Religion. A court may not favor one parent over the other because the court made a value judgment that children are better off with religious training than without it. If, however, a child has a history of significant religious activities that seem to benefit the child, the court can consider religion to the extent it promotes continuity in the child's life. Generally, both parents have equal rights to expose the child to differing religious beliefs unless there is clear, detailed evidence that certain religious practices are harmful to the child. A general assertion that a child is confused by differing religious beliefs is not sufficient basis for a court to prohibit a parent from involving a child in religious activities.

Undermining of one parent by the other. If one parent undermines the other parent to the child on a regular basis, that can be a significant factor in denying custody to the undermining parent. If both parents engage equally in psychological warfare, the factor is less significant.

Joint custody

Joint custody—sometimes referred to as shared custody—has two components: joint legal custody and joint physical custody. Joint legal custody refers to both parents sharing major decisions in the child's life such as education and health care. Joint physical custody refers to a time-sharing arrangement by which both parents spend substantial, although not necessarily equal, amounts of time with the child. Joint custody is an explicit option in most states, although 12 states have a general presumption in favor of joint custody.

In considering joint custody, a court should look at the degree to which the parents share values and can cooperate in raising the child. Proximity of the parents' homes also is important for joint physical custody arrangements in which the child moves frequently between the parents' homes.

Visitation

Visitation—including overnight visitation—is a natural right of the noncustodial parent and the child. Visitation cannot be denied unless there is a showing that the child would be endangered—for example, by child abuse or kidnapping. Even in cases in which there has been some danger to the child, it is common to allow supervised visitation. A child's desire not to see a parent usually is not sufficient to deny visitation.

There is no single formula for visitation, but time periods to be considered are: weekends, summers, holidays, weeknights, and special family events. If a custodial parent does not abide by a visitation order, the usual remedy is a motion to find the parent in contempt of court. Persistent interference with visitation also can be a basis for modifying custody. If a custodial parent believes that visitation is harmful to the child, the proper remedy is to seek modification of visitation; the parent should not simply deny visitation without a court order.

Modification

Although the standard for modifying custody varies from state to state, the most common standard is a substantial change of circumstances, coupled with a showing that the best interest of the child will be served by the modification. The substantial change usually must be with the custodial parent of the child; a change of circumstance of the noncustodial parent is not enough by itself to warrant modification. A few states will allow modification only if the child is physically or psychologically endangered. This standard is most often used to modify orders that have been in effect less than two years; as time passes (and as the child grows older) the standards for modification in many states relax somewhat.

A parent who seeks to modify custody usually has an uphill fight. Almost all states favor continuity in a child's life. Thus, the starting point for modification is a presumption in favor of the custodial parent, and the burden of proof is on the noncustodial parent.

The standard for modifying visitation is less rigorous than for modifying custody. For modification of visitation, a showing of best interest of the child—and not a substantial change of circumstance—usually is sufficient.

Out-of-state move

The willingness of courts to allow a custodial parent to move out of state with the child also varies. Most states allow a custodial parent to move with the child, provided there is a good faith reason for the move. Good faith reasons include: relocating for better employment, following a new spouse, and returning to the state of one's original family.

Some states (including New York) are reluctant to allow out-of-state moves because of the concern that the move will disrupt the relationship between the child and the noncustodial parent.

Regardless of which approach a state takes, key factors in evaluating a request to move include: the motives of the party seeking to move, the frequency with which visitation has been exercised, the wishes of the child, and the degree to which a meaningful relationship can be maintained between the noncustodial parent and child after the move.

Third-party rights

Parents have a natural right to custody of their children, but the right is not absolute. Grandparents and other third parties can gain custody of a child without showing that the parent is unfit. Most commonly this occurs when the third party has been raising the child for several years and the child wants to remain with the third party. In this event, most courts are reluctant to disturb the status quo. Courts are somewhat more willing to return a child to the parent if the parent has maintained regular, meaningful contact while the child has lived with the third party.

Visitation for grandparents has become a popular legal option. All 50 states have grandparent visitation statutes. Most statutes allow grandparent visitation upon the death of the parent to whom the grandparent is related by blood or upon divorce of the parents. Normally, visitation will not be granted for the child of an intact marriage. Before visitation is ordered, a court must find that it is in the child's best interests.

If a grandparent uses visitation to undermine the child's relationship with the parent, courts usually permit the parent to stop visitation. In some states, former stepparents, older siblings, and other interested parties also may be able to obtain visitation.

Mediation

A significant trend in the resolution of custody disputes is the use of mediation. Many states—particularly those with large urban areas—have begun using mediation to help resolve custody disputes. Some courts require parties to consult court-affiliated mediators before the court will conduct a trial on the issue. Mediators do not have power to settle a dispute, but they usually are successful in helping the parties work out their own solution. In some states, if the parties do not reach an agreement, the mediator's recommendation will go to the court.

In contested custody cases, courts have the power to appoint a lawyer for the child or a guardian *ad litem*. A court is particularly likely to do this if the dominant theme of the case is hostility between the parents rather than what is best for the child. Fees for the lawyer or guardian usually are assessed against the parties.

Support: The Child's Needs Versus the Parent's Ability to Pay

The traditional criteria for setting or modifying child support are the child's needs and the parents' ability to pay.

These criteria have been given considerably more structure as a result of the 1984 Child Support Enforcement Amendments and the 1988 Family Support Act. See 42 U.S.C. §§ 651-667 and P.L. 100-485. The federal legislation requires states to revise their laws regarding child support—particularly in the areas of guidelines and enforcement. If a state does not revise to comport with federal law, the state could lose federal funds for Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

Guidelines

When child support is an issue, the first point of legal reference usually is the guideline of the state in which support is sought. Congress did not mandate the type of guidelines a state must implement, but it did require that guidelines be used. Under the Family Support Act, state guidelines are to create a rebuttable presumption that the guideline amount is the appropriate level of support. The presumption may be rebutted by a specific finding according to criteria established by the state.

The purpose of guidelines is to promote fairness, uniformity, and efficiency in determining child support. Guidelines may be established by statute, by judicial action, or by administrative action; most are created by statute. Some states allow guidelines to be determined on a county-by-county basis.

The guidelines of different states vary considerably in the number of factors considered. The simplest guideline is based on a percentage of the net income of the noncustodial parent and the number of children. Illinois, for example, established a guideline of 20 percent of net income for one child;

Reprinted from Jeff Atkinson, "Support: The child's needs versus the parent's ability to pay," *Family Advocate*, Winter 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

25 percent for two children; 32 percent for three children; 40 percent for four children; 45 percent for five children, and 50 percent for six or more children. Other states (e.g., Pennsylvania and Oregon) will determine an amount of support based on the combined income of both parents and then allocate a duty of support to each parent in proportion to their incomes. The amount of time a child spends with each parent also may be factored into the formulas.

Most guidelines are based on the net income of the parents—in other words, income after deductions for federal income tax (be alert to over-withholding); state income tax; Social Security tax; and health insurance. Additional deductions for determining net income may include: union dues, mandatory pension deductions, and payment of debt for family expenses.

As noted, courts can order an amount of support other than the guideline amount upon a showing of good cause. Support may exceed the guideline amount if the child has special educational or health-care needs or if the guidelines do not sufficiently cover child-care expenses (particularly if the child is not yet in school).

Support might be less than that recommended by the guidelines if the income of the parties is high and the guidelines do not provide a cap on support payments. Other reasons for setting support at a rate less than that set by the guidelines could include support due to other children; the needs of a new family; heavy debts; a custody arrangement in which the child spends substantial amounts of time with each parent; and the need of the obligor parent to invest in a closely-held business (which, if the investment is successful, could add to the financial security of the child to whom support is due).

Modification

The traditional basis for modification is a substantial change in circumstances. The change usually is in the circumstances of the noncustodial parent or the needs of the child, but the change also may be in the circumstances of the custodial parent. Some states require periodic review of support payments so that support will reflect changes in the parents' incomes or the state's guidelines. Most states, however, require a substantial change in circumstances. Thus, a moderate increase or decrease in income (e.g., 15 percent) may not justify modification, but a larger shift (e.g., 50 percent) will justify modification. In future years, federal law may require a periodic review of support awards—particularly those involving families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

An obligor who owns a closely-held business may have to exercise special care in documenting changes in circumstances since courts are accustomed to seeing owners of closely-held businesses adjust income and expenses to suit their own convenience. To the extent an owner of a closely-held business has many of his or her expenses paid by the company when most people would pay such expenses themselves, the payments of expenses may be treated as income to the party receiving them for the purpose of setting child support.

Stepparent income is sometimes at issue in setting child support. In most states, stepparents are not obliged to support their stepchildren. Nonetheless, a stepparent's income usually can be considered to the extent that it frees up the income of the parent to help pay the child's expenses. For example, if the income of the stepparent helps pay the rent, mortgage, or utilities, then the parent has additional disposable income to pay expenses of the child.

Emancipation

The duty to support a child normally stops when a child reaches the age of majority (in most states, the age is 18). When parents have more than one child, the obligor parent often seeks to make a prorata reduction of child support when each child reaches the age of majority. This is permissible if the support order so provides.

But if the support order provides a single sum for support of all children, the obligor must continue to pay that sum until the last child reaches the age of majority (or until a court orders a reduction). If a child cannot be self-supporting because of a severe physical or mental handicap, a parent's obligation for support will continue past the age of majority.

College support

The obligation of a parent to support a child's education after high school varies from state to state. Some states require no support after a child reaches age 18 (or graduates from high school). In some states, courts have ruled that it is unconstitutional to require a divorced parent to pay college support when a nondivorced parent could not be required to pay college support.

On the other hand, the guidelines of many states do allow a court to order support for a child's education after high school. In states that allow such support, the two most important factors are: the ability of the parent to pay and the likelihood the child will benefit from the education.

Subsidiary factors might include: the child's motivation for higher education; the child's past academic performance; the parents' educational backgrounds; the station in life of the parents and the child; the cost of the school; the child's relationship to the parent from whom the support is sought; the length of any interruption in the child's education; and the ability of the child to help pay for his or her own education.

Enforcement

The federal Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984 and the Family Support Act of 1988 require states to make several changes in their procedures for collection of child support. The major enforcement procedures:

Income withholding. Under federal law, states must provide for automatic withholding of income of obligors who are delinquent in paying child support. States also may require immediate withholding for child support even if the obligor is not delinquent.

Beginning November 1, 1990, all support orders that are enforced by a state IV-D agency must contain an immediate withholding provision (regardless of arrearage) unless: (1) the court finds good cause not to require withholding or (2) the parties agree to an alternate arrangement. This immediate withholding provision applies to *all* cases handled by state IV-D agencies, thus including both A.F.D.C. cases and non-A.F.D.C. cases. Withholding most commonly applies to wages, but states may adopt procedures for withholding of income from other sources as well.

Interception of tax refunds. The Child Support Enforcement Amendments allow interception of state and federal income tax refunds for payment of delinquent support obligations. This remedy is available through state child support officials; it does not appear to be available directly through private lawyers.

Other procedures required by federal law. In addition to income withholding and tax-refund intercepts, the Child Support Enforcement Amendments also require several other enforcement mechanisms, including: (1) expedited judicial or administrative process for handling support and paternity cases; (2) procedures for imposition of liens on real estate and personal property; (3) procedures for permitting establishment of paternity at any time prior to the child's 18th birthday; (4) procedures for requiring an obligor to post a bond or other security to secure support or payment of delinquent support; (5) procedures for reporting information about an obligor's overdue support to credit reporting agencies; and (6) use of the federal Parent Locator Service to locate absent obligors.

Civil contempt. Contempt of court is a common enforcement device for collection of unpaid support. Contempt for failure to pay support may be civil or criminal, although civil contempt is more common. In most states, a *prima facie* showing of civil contempt is made through evidence that the obligor did not pay support as required by court order. Upon a showing that the obligor did not pay support, the burden of proof shifts to the obligor to show that the failure to pay was not willful. Lack of funds to pay support usually removes the element of willfulness unless it appears that the obligor was acting in bad faith in losing his or her financial resources.

Criminal contempt. The difference between civil contempt and criminal contempt has to do with the purpose and nature of the sentence. Civil contempt is used to coerce compliance, and the sentence is indeterminant—the punishment will cease when the defendant complies with the court order. Criminal contempt is punitive—designed to punish a prior wrongdoing. The sentence generally is fixed; a criminal sentence will not necessarily cease upon compliance by the defendant with the court order.

Both civil and criminal contempt sentences can include incarceration, a fine, or both. In 1988, the U.S. Supreme Court limited the ability of courts to shift the burden of proof in a case of criminal contempt. In *Hicks v. Feiock,* 108 S.Ct. 1423 (1988), the court held that it is not permissible to require a defendant charged with criminal contempt to bear the burden of proof on inability to pay, although it is permissible to impose such a burden in a case of civil contempt.

A practical impact of the holding for a party seeking to hold a support obligor in contempt is twofold: (1) If the party seeks to hold the obligor in civil contempt, the obligor still has the burden of proof on inability to pay (in most jurisdictions); and (2) If the party seeks to hold the obligor in criminal contempt, that party must not only prove that support was not paid, but also must prove that the obligor had the ability to pay.

R.U.R.E.S.A. Most states have enacted the Revised Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act

(R.U.R.E.S.A.). The act is designed to ease interstate enforcement of support. Procedures under the act are somewhat intricate, but basically enforcement proceeds in two steps.

First, a party to whom support payments are due (usually a parent or the state) initiates an action for enforcement of support using verified pleadings. The court of the initiating state forwards the petition to a responding state where the obligor or the obligor's assets are believed to be located.

Second, the responding court attempts to gain jurisdiction over the obligor and enforce the order. The obligor is required to make payments to the responding court or a designated agency and the payments are then forwarded to the initiating court, which, in turn, distributes the payments to the party to whom support is due.

Effect of interference with visitation. Interference with visitation normally is not a defense to failure to pay support. Most states view visitation and support as independent issues. If a party is deprived of either visitation or support, the party may seek a finding of contempt of court (or some other remedy), but the party may not withhold support to enforce visitation or withhold visitation to enforce support.

If, however, a situation becomes extreme enough, a court may permit withholding of support because of interference with visitation. Two examples: (1) If the custodial parent moves away and does not tell the obligor where the child is located, the obligor may be relieved of the support obligation during the period in which the child could not be located; and (2) If the parties agree that the obligor will not have to pay support in exchange for the obligor foregoing visitation, some states may relieve the obligor of the duty of support if the custodial parent waits until the child reaches the age of majority before seeking to collect support.

Social Security

When Social Security was enacted in the 1930s, the typical American family was considered to be a husband who was employed full time, a wife who was an unpaid homemaker and mother in a stable marriage.[1] Amendments to the original act, made in 1939, establishes benefits for the worker's dependents (assumed to be the female spouse) and survivors of the primary earner.[2] At that time only one woman in four was employed, and in only 3 out of 20 households were both spouses employed at the same time.[3]

Extensive changes in the work life of women have taken place since that time. These combined with almost equally great changes in marriage and divorce patterns, have resulted in serious imbalances and inequities in the Social Security benefits.

Currently women can qualify for Social Security benefits by their own contributions or they may take spousal or widow benefits, whichever is greater. They may not claim both.

When a worker covered by Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) retires, that worker is eligible for retired worker benefits if she or he has worked sufficient quarters to attain insured status. The benefits are based on average indexed monthly earnings with up to 5 of the lowest years dropped. Retirees born in 1929 or later will have their average indexed monthly earnings (AIME) calculated over a constant 35 years. If the worker retires before age 65, the benefits are reduced for each month they are received prior to age 65.[4] For workers who continue to work past age 65 and delay applying for OASI benefits, the benefit is increased by 3 percent a year up to a maximum of 15 percent. However, continued work after age 65 means a loss in total benefits over her of his remaining lifetime due to decreased life expectancy.[5]

Reprinted from *Wisconsin Women and the Law*, 1989, Wisconsin Women's Council, State Bar of Wisconsin, and Milwaukee Bar Association Foundation, Inc.

Survivors of an insured worker are eligible for survivor benefits based on the past earnings of the deceased worker.[6] Thus an aged spouse, upon widowhood, will receive two-thirds of the total benefit for which the couple qualified prior to death, or the amount equal to that which the covered worker would have received as a single retiree. A divorced spouse may receive an amount equal to 50 percent of the former mate's benefits and the divorced widow an amount equal to 100 percent, if those amounts are greater than those earned by the divorcee.[7] However, these benefits depend on the marriage having been intact for 10 years or more. The receipt of the spousal benefits depend on the action of the covered worker. They are available only after the covered worker has started to draw them and may be reduced by the worker's market work.[8]

The unmarried woman who has a record of continuous work in covered employment is entitled to the same benefits as a single male retiree with a similar employment record. However, the lower compensation of most women results in lower benefits for women than for men even when their educational preparation and years of service are the same. In addition, the low prevailing compensation in predominantly female occupations has the same effect. The longer life expectancy of women compounds the problem as their lower benefits result in a longer period of reduced retirement incomes despite inflation adjustments, whose future is uncertain at best.

The provisions and conditions of spousal benefits probably were acceptable at the time when few women were employed in market work. Now, when over half of all married women are employed, the married woman who works outside the home for several years, but whose benefits based on her own earnings would be lower than her spousal benefits receives only spousal benefits.[9] Thus her own contributions to Social Security yield her no retirement benefit. This feature is viewed as a penalty on working wives.[10]

There are those who argue that the taxes paid by the lower earning female do, in fact, provide some advantages not enjoyed by the homemaker. These include disability protection not available to the homemaker and survivor benefits for her dependents.

Although divorcees may qualify for spousal benefits if they were married for 10 years, a divorcee married for 9 years and 11 months would receive no benefits. This arbitrary cut off date may make the timing of a divorce a critical issue, although one over which the divorcee has little or no control. The divorcee under age 60 who has no dependent children is not entitled to any benefits and thus has no insurance against her inability to compete in the labor market because of the years spent in unpaid homemaking. This same regulation also compounds the problem of the widow receiving survivor benefits while she has young children and remains out of the labor market. When the last child outgrows his or her survivor benefits, the widow's benefits also cease until she reaches 62. These so called "black-out" years pose a real problem for the widow who is at a disadvantage in the labor market.[11]

An additional problem with the current implementation of Social Security occurs in the comparison of benefits of two-earner married couples and one-earner families with the same incomes. The benefits based on the earnings of one earner are higher—the primary benefit plus the dependent—than the benefits received by both spouses based on their individual earnings.[12]

The provision of the retiree's benefits to their surviving widows also appear to be inadequate. Within a year after the husband died, 37 percent of the widows, not previously poor, had fallen below the poverty line.[13] This is a serious problem for women because two in five women can expect to survive their husbands and live as widows for an average of 15 years.[14]

Closely related to the Social Security benefits are those provided by Medicare and Medicaid. These are of particular importance to women because of their longevity and the probability of becoming surviving widows. Medicare when supplemented by good "Medigap" insurance provides a level of protection for medical costs, although the costs of both keep rising as do medical and hospital charges.[15]

Long term nursing home costs are not covered by Medicare nor by supplementary insurance with the exception of a few recent policies.[16] Almost half of all nursing home costs are paid out of pocket by patients and their families. The average cost of a year in a nursing home is $22,000 plus additional charges for medication, personal care items and therapy.[17]

Medicaid is available for nursing home care only after personal or family resources have been depleted to about $1,800, a home and its furnishing if occupied by the spouse and/or family, a car, a small life insurance policy, and prepaid funeral expenses. Virtually all income such as Social Security and/or pensions must be applied to the Medicaid recipient's bill. These provisions result in poverty for the surviving spouse, usually the female.[18]

---

[1] Burkhauser and Holden, *Introduction*, in A Challenge to Social Security 8 (R. Burkhauser and K. Holden, eds. 1982).

[2] *Id.* at 7.

[3] *Id* at 10.

[4] *Id* at 2.

[5] *Id.*

[6] *Id* at 3, 4.

[7] *Id.*

[8] *Id.*

[9] *Id* at 11.

[10] *Id.*

[11] *Id* at 59-65.

[12] *Id* at 75.

[13] "Living Alone and Loving It," U.S. News and World Report, Aug. 3, 1987, at 54.

[14] *Id.*

[15] "Caring for the Folks," Wall Street Journal, Nov. 13, 1987, at 35D-37D.

[16] *Id.*

[17] *Id.*

Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit

A tax credit for actual expenses incurred for child or dependent care is available to an employed person if the expenditures enable that person to be gainfully employed. The credit is computed at 30 percent for taxpayers with incomes of $10,000 or less, with the rate of the credit reduced one percentage point for each additional $2,000 of income above $10,000. When incomes are over $28,000, the credit is computed at 20 percent. The limits on expenses for which the credit may be taken are $2,400 for one dependent and $4,800 for two or more dependents. The chart below shows the amount of credit that may be taken at various income levels.

		Maximum $ Amount of Credit	
Family Income Before Taxes	Percentage Tax Credit	1 Dependent	2 or More Dependents
Up to $10,000	30	$720	$1,440
$10,001 to 12,000	29	696	1,392
12,001 to 14,000	28	672	1,344
14,001 to 16,000	27	648	1,296
16,001 to 18,000	26	624	1,248
18,001 to 20,000	25	600	1,200
20,001 to 22,000	24	576	1,152
22,001 to 24,000	23	552	1,104
24,001 to 26,000	22	528	1,056
26,001 to 28,000	21	504	1,008
28,001 and over	20	480	960

The expenses may be for services provided in the taxpayer's home, or for out-of-home care for dependents under age 15, or for adult dependents who are disabled and who live with the taxpayer. This means that day care expenses for dependent adults are included, but expenses for residential care in a nursing home or similar facility for dependent adults are not. Credit is available to all eligible taxpayers, regardless of the gross income of the family, whether or not they itemize deductions, or which tax form they file. It is available to married couples if either or both spouses work full and/or part time, to single working parents, and to full-time students with working spouses. To claim the credit, married couples must file a joint return. In the case of part-time workers, the amount of qualified expenses (those on which the 20 to 30 percent credit is figured) is limited to the earnings of the spouse

Reprinted from *A Working Woman's Guide To Her Job Rights,* June 1988, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary, Women's Bureau.

with the lower income. For example, if one spouse earned less than $2,000 and the couple had two children, and the child care expenses exceeded $4,800, the amount of expenses allowable for computing the credit would be $2,000, the amount of the low-earning spouse's income. The earned income limit is equally applicable to unmarried taxpayers.

The credit is also available to a divorced or separated parent who has custody of a child under age 15 for more than half the calendar year—even though the other spouse may claim the personal income tax exemption for a dependent child. A deserted spouse may claim the credit if the deserting spouse is absent for the last 6 months of the taxable year.

Payments to relatives, such as grandparents or adult children including those living in the same household, qualify for the credit, provided the relative is not the taxpayer's dependent and the relative's wages are subject to social security taxes. However, no credit is allowable for payments made to a child of the taxpayer under age 18.

The credit is computed on an annual basis. For that reason, the entire amount of qualifying expenses on which the credit is computed ($2,400 or $4,800) is available to eligible taxpayers having the appropriate number of dependents at any time during the taxable year.

How Women Can Assert Their Job Rights

The first step in asserting your legal rights is to know what those rights are. It is important to know which practices are prohibited by law, and to distinguish these from actions which may seem unjust, but which are not lawful.

You should also keep in mind that an employer can take action against an employee for good cause. Laws that protect against discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, or handicap do not prevent an employer from discharging you if you are not doing your job; nor do they require employers to hire you if you are not qualified for the job.

You can resolve many problems associated with getting a job or coping with a particular job situation through discussion with personnel officers or supervisors. Informal problem solving is frequently the quickest method for settling a dispute; often the problem arises because of misunderstanding, lack of communication, or ignorance of the employee's rights. In many work establishments, informal conciliation is part of grievance procedures under collective bargaining agreements, personnel policies, or formal equal employment opportunity programs.

However, if you believe that you are being paid less than a legal wage, or are the victim of discrimination prohibited by law, you are entitled to file a complaint with the agency that has responsibility for enforcing the law. Procedures for making complaints vary; a telephone request is enough to set in motion an investigation into substandard wages or unequal pay, whereas a written complaint is necessary under some antidiscrimination laws.

If you feel that you are being treated unfairly, take care to document incidents to support a complaint.

Reprinted from *A Working Woman's Guide To Her Job Rights*, June 1988, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary, Women's Bureau.

Written notes on what happened and when, and who was there, are very useful in refreshing the memory and showing a pattern of unfair treatment.

There are time limits on filing complaints, so it is important to act promptly. If you are unsure about how the law might apply to a specific situation, call the agency that handles those complaints to talk with compliance officers who are trained to provide information about filing complaints.

In addition, most agencies with enforcement or administrative responsibilities for Federal laws print pamphlets with information for consumers. Free copies of these materials are generally available from the agency upon request. Additional sources of assistance and information exist in the form of community based organizations that have information and referral, counseling, or legal assistance services. The local bar association, a State or local commission on women, or an information and referral center may be able to provide information about these resources.

Sources of Assistance: Federal Agencies
National Offices:

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Washington, D.C. 20507

Civil Rights Division
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, D.C. 20201

Social Security Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Baltimore, Maryland 21235

Internal Revenue Service
U.S. Department of the Treasury
Washington, D.C. 20224

Office of Revenue Sharing
U.S. Department of the Treasury
Washington, D.C. 20226

Federal Trade Commission
Washington, D.C. 20580

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp.
202 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Office of Labor and Management Standards
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Office of Pension and Welfare
Benefit Programs
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Occupational Safety and Health Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
Employment Standards Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
Employment Standards Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Women's Bureau
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Wage and Hour Division
Employment Standards Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

How to Care for Your Landlord

On August 15, Larry Landlord swore that he crossed his heart and hoped to die if Michelle Tenant's water faucet wasn't fixed by September 1. Although discouraged by the delay, Michelle understood that Larry was busy and accepted his solemn promise. After September 1 came and went and Larry broke a few more promises, Michelle finally threatened to call a building inspector. Her hot water was working the next day.

Michelle failed to properly care for her landlord. First, Michelle didn't get Larry's promise in writing. A written promise would have left no doubt about what Larry and Michelle had agreed to. Michelle's failure to document Larry's promise makes it difficult for her to take any action against Larry for breaking their rental agreement. Although Michelle may not want to take Larry to court, she has lost the negotiating leverage that a written promise would give her.

Second, Michelle passively accepted Larry's excuses for too long. When the water was not fixed within a reasonable amount of time, Michelle could have written Larry a letter that reminded him of his promise and demanded that the repair be made promptly. The letter should have stated that Michelle would call the building inspector if Larry did not respond.

Michelle learned the importance of getting promises in writing and of asserting her tenant rights. Michelle now knows how to properly care for her landlord. The following sections deal with properly caring for your landlord by keeping a rental file and by asserting your tenant rights.

Keeping a Rental File

Dan's landlord wants to charge him a $25 late fee because Dan didn't pay the rent on time. Dan knows that late fees can only be charged if they are

Reprinted from *Student Renter's Survival Guide*, Student Tenant Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

specified in the lease. But Dan doesn't have a copy of his lease. He used it to line his bird cage when he ran out of newspaper.

Tenants need to prepare themselves beforehand to deal with problems. Repair requests, security deposit disputes, and other important issues should all be documented thoroughly.

Documentation cannot be stressed enough. The most frustrating problems occur when the tenant has lost half the battle because they cannot document their grievances. In order to prevent this problem, start a **rental file**. Start your rental file when you sign the lease and add to it throughout your lease term.

Include in your rental file:

- **The lease** and all addendums. The landlord must give you a copy at the time you sign the lease.
- **Rental log**. In a single notebook, write all the dates and times when you have contacted or tried to contact your landlord. Make a short notation about what was discussed. Logs are very useful as a permanent record of how the landlord did or did not respond to problems.
- **Check-in and check-out forms**. These forms document the condition of your apartment when you move in and move out. Keep a copy of these forms and send the original to the landlord by certified mail with return receipt.
- **Letters** to or from the landlord. Always make any complaints or serious communications with your landlord in writing. All verbal requests should also be followed up in writing. For more information on writing letters, see the handout entitled "How to Write a Letter."
- **Reports**. Keep copies of building inspection reports, police reports, and reports of other

government agencies. To get copies, you must go to the office that issued the report, request a copy, and pay a copying fee.

- **Pictures.** A few photos may be the evidence you need to document a repair or security deposit problem. Photos should be dated and signed by a witness.

Keeping a rental file isn't a lot of work considering the money you may recoup through rent abatement or through keeping your security deposit. If you do have a rental problem, negotiating a solution with the landlord is much easier when you have written records that show the extent of the problem, what you asked the landlord to do about it, and how the landlord responded.

Asserting Your Tenant Rights

Some renters find that they have good landlords—the type that keep up property, comply with rental laws, and treat tenants with respect.

If you are renting from a good landlord, congratulations. You will probably never have to waste time trying to get problems fixed. However, regardless of your housing situation, always keep a complete rental file (see above).

If you end up renting from a landlord who does not respect your tenant rights, be assertive. You will probably have to take the initiative to solve rental problems.

The Tenant-Landlord Relationship

Tenants who fare best in the struggle to maintain adequate housing conditions not only keep a complete rental file but also know and are prepared to assert their tenant rights.

Your rental agreement is a contract that puts you and your landlord in a business relationship. You fulfill your part of that relationship by paying a sizable amount of rent and following the rules in your rental agreement. In return, it is your right—

and you should expect and demand that right—to have your landlord comply with all lease rules, city and state laws and personal agreements you have made. Even if you feel your landlord is a "good guy," don't accept conditions that minimize your enjoyment of your apartment or that affect your health or safety.

Asserting your tenant rights does not mean that you have to have an antagonistic relationship with your landlord. Conscientious landlords will make efforts to promptly resolve problems that you bring to their attention. They will recognize and respect your legal right to enjoy a quiet, well-maintained, safe apartment.

Landlords who become hostile or who do not respond when tenants ask that problems be fixed can best be handled by vigorously asserting your tenant rights. Once you show that landlord that you know your rights and how to enforce them, the landlord will usually fix problems.

The Role of Rental Laws

Don't be timid about applying security deposit laws, landlord entry laws, or other laws that protect your welfare as a tenant. These laws give you basic, everyday rights to privacy, safety and landlord accountability. The laws balance the landlord's ability to make up rental rules with reasonable legal standards that give tenants some control over their living conditions.

Why Use Your Tenant Rights?

If anything about your rental situation does not seem right or fair, you should find out what your tenant rights are to learn if anything may be done. You have a significant financial interest at stake that should be protected. More important, housing is too fundamental a need and too important to your emotional well-being to allow rental problems to frustrate your ability to maintain a positive home environment. Keep in mind that it's the landlord's house but it's your home.

How To Assert Your Tenant Rights

Any time that you have a rental problem, you should try to solve it by using a sequence of progressively more formal actions. If the first action doesn't work, try the next.

- **Inform the landlord about problems.** Your landlord won't respond to a problem that s/he hasn't been made aware of. The first step is to call the landlord about the problem. Some landlords are willing to remedy problems once they know about them; others become willing when you mention that you might call the building inspector or take other action. It's up to you to let your landlord know something's wrong.

  However, there is a limit to how many times you should have to inform your landlord of a problem. If you have told the landlord about the problem twice (or left two messages on her/his answering machine) and have not received a response, it's time to write a letter.

- **Write a letter.** If the landlord does not respond to your phone calls or if you have a serious problem, write a letter that describes the problem and requests that it be fixed. Writing a letter may seem unnecessary or tedious, but it is the only way to permanently document serious problems. (For information on writing a letter, see the handout entitled "How to Write a Letter.")

- **Negotiation.** If the landlord's response has not been adequate, set up a meeting to negotiate solutions. To prepare for the meeting, read the rest of this section. You may want to bring a friend to the meeting for moral support and to act as a witness.

- **Know your facts.** When writing a letter or negotiating, outline the history of your problem to your landlord. Use your rental log to cite specific dates when you asked that the problems be fixed and when the landlord promised to fix them. Highlight why the landlord's response has been inadequate. Mention the types of documentation you have to prove your case, such as your check-in forms, photos and any other evidence from your rental file.

- **Know your rights.** Your landlord is more likely to respond to problems quickly if you emphasize that you know your tenant rights. Don't assume that your landlord (or your parents, friends or great uncle) will give you accurate information about the laws.

Reprinted from *Student Renter's Survival Guide*, Student Tenant Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

- **Have definite goals.** When you negotiate, know how the problem should be resolved, what you are willing to settle for and what steps you will take if no satisfactory agreement is made.

- **Make all agreements in writing.** This is crucial. If the landlord has agreed to do any specific tasks, a completion date should be stated in the agreement. You and the landlord should sign, date, and keep a copy of all agreements. Verbal promises aren't worth the paper they're not written on. Written agreements are best because they provide a permanent record of exactly what you and the landlord have agreed to.

Keeping a Rental File

Tenants need to prepare themselves beforehand to deal with problem. Repair requests, security deposit disputes, and other important issues should all be documented thoroughly.

Documentation cannot be stressed enough. The most frustrating problems occur when the tenant has lost half the battle because they cannot document their grievances. In order to prevent this problem, start a **rental file**. Start your rental file when you sign the lease and add to it throughout your lease term.

Include in your rental file:

- **The lease** and all addendums. The landlord must give you a copy at the time you sign the lease.
- **Rental log**. In a single notebook, write all the dates and times when you have contacted or tried to contact your landlord. Make a short notation about what was discussed. Logs are very useful as a permanent record of how the landlord did or did not respond to problems.
- **Check-in and check-out forms**. These forms document the condition of your apartment when you move in and move out. Keep a copy of these forms and send the original to the landlord by certified mail with return receipt.
- **Letters** to or from the landlord. Always make any complaints or serious communications with your landlord in writing. All verbal requests should also be followed up in writing. For more information on writing letters, see the handout entitled "How to Write a Letter."
- **Reports**. Keep copies of building inspection reports, police reports, and reports of other government agencies. To get copies, you must go to the office that issued the report, request a copy, and pay a copying fee.
- **Pictures**. A few photos may be the evidence you need to document a repair or security deposit problem. Photos should be dated and signed by a witness.

Keeping a rental file isn't a lot of work considering the money you may recoup through rent abatement or through keeping your security deposit. If you do have a rental problem, negotiating a solution with the landlord is much easier when you have written records that show the extent of the problem, what you asked the landlord to do about it, and how the landlord responded.

Reprinted from *Student Renter's Survival Guide*, Student Tenant Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Tenant Rights: How to Write a Letter

Letters document rental problems and your efforts to get them resolved. Include in your letters:

- A complete, concise description of the problem.
- A history of the problem. List what you have done, what your landlord hasn't done, and when all communications have taken place. Include specific dates from your rental log.
- State why your landlord's response is inadequate. Mention the state and city laws that your landlord has violated.
- Specifically and thoroughly list what actions you want the landlord to take.
- Set a deadline for a response from your landlord.
- State what steps you'll take if your landlord doesn't respond. Let your landlord know that you are prepared to call a building inspector, city attorney, police, lawyer or anyone else who will help resolve your problem. Let the landlord know that you are willing to take him to court if your problem isn't satisfactorily resolved.
- Type your letter. A formal letter indicates that you are serious about resolving your problem. Avoid Garfield stationery to give your letter a serious and dignified tone. (See model letters that follow.)
- Keep a copy of your letter. Make sure you date the letter and keep it in your rental file.
- Send your letter by certified mail with return receipt. To send a letter by certified mail, fill out a certified mail slip and a return receipt card at the post office. Both are attached to the envelope. The return receipt card will be sent to you with the landlord's signature and the date the landlord received your letter. Keep the card in your rental file as proof that your landlord received your letter. This evidence is worth the minor cost of sending a letter by certified mail.

Reprinted from *Student Renter's Survival Guide*, Student Tenant Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Example of a Repair Problem Letter

September 1, 1988

345 Maple Avenue
Madison, WI 53715

Happy Home Management Company
1345 Spruce Drive
Madison, WI 53715

Dear Happy Home Management Company,

We are writing in regard to repairs that need to be made at our apartment.

Since we moved in two weeks ago, we have had the following problems:

1. The hot water faucet on the bathtub leaks. There is a constant stream of water coming from it even when the faucet is completely shut off. The faucet is hot from the dripping water and could burn someone. In addition, we are paying to heat the dripping water.

2. The deadbolt on the front door is loose. The knob that turns the deadbolt jiggles and may soon fall off. This problem endangers our safety and security.

We notified you of these problems on August 15. At that time, the secretary in the office said you would "have someone over to take care of it right away." We also indicated the problems on our check-in form and attached a special note requesting these repairs.

We left messages on your answering machine on August 22, August 27 and August 28, as we have been unable to get through your lines to talk to anyone in person. We have received no response to our requests that these repairs be made.

Unless these repairs are completed within 48 hours of your receipt of this letter, we will have no choice but to call the Madison Building Inspection Unit and arrange for an inspection. We are aware of the city rent abatement ordinance which would allow us to abate rent for problems such as these if they were not fixed by the inspector's deadline.

Your immediate attention to these problems would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mary Smith
Dan Jones
Veronica Brown

Unit 2
Communicating Effectively

Note to Instructors: Plan on spending nine classroom hours on "Unit 2: Communicating Effectively." The nine hours can be divided in any way that best meets the needs of your group. If you choose to divide the time evenly among the three Competencies, then spend roughly three hours on each Competency.

Unit 2 includes:

6.0 Skills to Effective Verbal Communication
7.0 Skills to Effective Listening
8.0 Demonstrate Skills to Maintain Effective Behavior

Competency 6.0

Skills to effective verbal communication

6.01	Identify different types of communication styles.
6.02	Assess assertiveness.
6.03	Demonstrate communication styles.
6.04	Recognize the effect of non-verbal communication to enhance/inhibit the communication process.
6.05	Identify the roles of people in a group.

Competency 6.0
Overview

Effective communication is necessary in all facets of life: on the job; at home; and dealing with repair people, landlords, lawyers, and utility companies. For women, communication often can be a problem. Most women are not brought up knowing how to assert their rights. Further, some men are trained to discount what women say.

People with effective communication styles will have better relationships with their families and friends, they present themselves better at job interviews, and their job performance is likely to be high. For these reasons, then, learning to communicate effectively is of major concern to those newly entering or re-entering the job market.

This competency is designed to help participants become more aware of the range of communication styles, and to practice using communication techniques that are effective. Participants completing Competency 6.0: Skills to Effective Verbal Communication will be able to:

6.01 Identify different types of communication styles
6.02 Assess assertiveness
6.03 Demonstrate communication styles, especially assertiveness
6.04 Recognize the effect of non-verbal communication to enhance or inhibit the communication process
6.05 Identify the roles of people in a group

Indicator 6.0 provides an overview of various styles of communication. Participants will become familiar with "I-Messages," conflict resolution styles, and assertiveness techniques. In 6.02 and 6.03, participants focus more on their own styles. Indicator 6.02 asks participants to delve more deeply into what is meant by assertiveness, and they learn the components of assertiveness. Activities and rating scales help participants assess their own assertiveness. Indicator 6.03 discusses specific techniques for healthy communication styles. Indicator 6.04 asks the instructor to lead the group in a discussion of non-verbal communication, or "body language." Finally, Indicator 6.05 asks participants to pay attention to group dynamics, and how communication styles mix in group settings.

Competency 6.0: Skills to Effective Verbal Communication

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
6.01 Identify different types of communication styles	Discussion; lecture	*Overview of Communication Skills*
	Lecture; activities	*Instructions for Teaching the I-Message*
	Activity	*Communicating to Solve Problems*
	Activity	*Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument*
	Lecture; discussion	*Types of Interpersonal Behavior*
	Lecture; discussion	*Assertiveness (note accompanying overhead)*
6.02 Assess assertiveness	Lecture; activities	*Assertiveness Training (note accompanying overheads)*
	Discussion	*Developing an Assertive Belief System*
	Discussion	*Your Assertive Rights*
	Activity	*Assertiveness Inventory*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
6.02 (continued)	Activity	*Self-Assessment of Assertiveness*
6.03 Demonstrate communication styles	Discussion	*Avoiding Self-Defeating Behaviors in Communication*
	Discussion	*How to Achieve Your Goals . . . Assertiveness*
	Discussion; role play	*Assertiveness with Style*
	Discussion	*Techniques for Assertiveness*
	Activity	*Steps in Asserting Yourself*
6.04 Recognize the effect of non-verbal communication	Discussion	*The Components of Assertive Behavior (note accompanying overheads)*
6.05 Identify the roles of people in a group	Activity	*Are You Someone Who . . . ?*
	Activity	*Conflict Chart for General Use*
	Activity	*Assertive Techniques*
	Activity	*Role Playing Assertive Behavior*

Resources

Alberti, Robert E. (1982). Your perfect right: A guide to assertive living. San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publications.

Beattie, Melody. (1988). Codependent no more: How to stop controlling others and start caring for yourself. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Butler, Pamela. (1981). Self-assertion for women. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Callahan, Betsy N. (1980). Assertiveness training. Boston: Resource Communications, Inc.

Dickson, Anne. (1982). A woman in your own right. New York: Quartet Books.

Jakubowski, Patricia, and Lange, Arthur J. (1978). The assertive option: Your rights and responsibilities. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Lange, Arthur J. and Jakubowski, Patricia. (1977). Responsible assertive behavior. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Lerner, Harriet. (1989). Dance of anger: A woman's guide to changing the patterns of intimate relationships. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Manis, Laura. (1984). Assertion training workshop: Leader guide. Holmes Beach, FL: Learning Publications, Inc.

Plas, Jeanne M. and Hoover-Dempsey, Kathleen V. (1988). Working up a storm: Anger, anxiety, joy, and tears on the job—and how to handle them. New York: W. W. Norton and Co.

Rush, Ramona R. and Allen, Donna. (1989). Communications at the crossroads: The gender gap connection. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Co.

Slipman, Sue. (1986). Helping ourselves to power: A handbook for women on the skills of public life. New York: Pergamon Press.

Smith, Manuel J. (1985). When I say no, I feel guilty. New York: Bantam Books.

Tavris, Carol. (1984). Anger: The misunderstood emotion. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Overview of Communication Skills

Silence:

Passive listening with accompanying non-verbal behaviors (posture, eye contact, etc.) that communicate interest and concern.

Non-Committal Acknowledgement:

Brief expressions that communicate understanding, acceptance and empathy, such as:

"Oh"
"I see"
"Mn-mmm"
"How about that"

"Really"
"No fooling"
"You did, huh"
"Interesting"

Door Openers:

Invitation to expand or continue the expressions of thoughts or feelings. Again the listening is sharing interests and involvement. Examples:

"Tell me about it"
"I'd like to hear your thinking"
"Let's discuss it"
"Sounds like you've got some feeling about this"
"I'd be interested in what you've got to say"

Content Paraphrase:

Putting the factual portion of the message into your own words and sending it back to check your accuracy in understanding: Examples are:

"So you really told your boss off?"
"You're saying, if your plan works, the problem will be solved."
"She just keeps going on and on, huh?"

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family,* 1985, by permission of the Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute.

Active Listening:

Helping the sender to understand both the thoughts and feelings of his/her communication. The listener does this by reflecting or mirroring what he/she has heard. Examples are:

"You sounded upset when when he/she used your bike."
"You are not pleased with the way your part of the report is coming."
"You're stumped about what to do next."

Non-Verbal Observation:

A sensitive observation of an individual's behavior to understand feelings that are not being expressed verbally. Examples:

"You look sad"
"You seem anxious and upset"
"I think you're getting nervous about the late hour" (after noting clock gazing)

Responding to Legitimate Dependency:

Providing information or actions to meet straightforward needs that are not coded or masked expressions of deeper needs. Example:

"What is today's meeting schedule?"
Answer: "We will be starting at 8:00 a.m. . . . "

Instructions for Teaching the I-Message

What is an I-Message?

An I-Message is a method of stating your opinion, thoughts, or feelings on a subject with a sentence starting with "I."

Some examples of this might be:

I think . . .
I feel . . .
In my experience . . .

We send an I-Message when we have a need to communicate our feelings and want to avoid labeling or judging another person.

Sometimes when people are not familiar with this type of communication they send "You-Messages." These tend to be blaming, judging, and labeling messages which hurt another's feelings or cause relationship problems.

Some examples of You-Messages are:

You are dumb.
You can't do anything right.
You drive me crazy.
You never show your love for me.

When we send You-Messages, we put people on the defensive. What we really want to do is to let people know how their behavior makes us feel. When we respond to our children with, "You drive me crazy," we may really be saying, "I would like to play with you right now, but I must do my homework for class. I will play with you when I finish reading this. I need you to play outside now until I finish."

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

If we can use the I-Message to communicate with our children we will help them to feel better about themselves by not putting them down. This will help their self-esteem and communicate our real feelings.

Learning to send an I-Message

An I-Message may have many purposes:

1. You can express your feelings.
2. You can tell another how their behavior is affecting you.
3. You can let another person know you need help.
4. You can communicate without blaming or putting another person down.
5. The message opens communication and builds relationships.
6. The message can (but does not always) lead to a behavior change in the other person to solve a problem.

Examples of types of I-Messages

I-Messages expressing feelings and behavior:

1. I am really proud of you for the way you put your toys away so nicely.
2. I am disappointed when you leave your toys on the floor.

I-Messages expressing feelings, behavior, and the effects on the speaker:

1. I am really proud of you for the way you put your toys away so nicely, because it keeps the house so neat.
2. I am disappointed when you leave your toys on the floor, because people can trip and fall on them.

Forms for practicing I-Messages

The following forms can be used for students to practice writing I-Messages about feelings they have and would like to share (putting these forms on the board will help students to organize their thoughts for writing the messages).

Two part I-Messages:

I feel __________ when you ____________ .
feeling you have — behavior of other

Three part I-Messages:

I feel __________ when you ____________ .
feeling you have — behavior of other

because ____________________________ .
effects on you from their behavior

Errors in sending I-Messages

Avoid disguised You-Messages when sending an I-Message:

1. Watch for I-Messages which are just "I" followed by a put-down, criticism, or a blaming message.
2. These messages will harm a relationship and stop the communication process.

Examples of disguised You-Messages:

1. I feel you are lazy when you don't clean your room.
2. I need you to stop acting like a jerk and really embarrassing me.
3. I think you are really acting immaturely when you cry about not having time for yourself.

Further tips for sending I-Messages

Be honest:

1. Don't explain yourself away—be direct.
2. Don't apologize.

Focus on issues, not a person, when describing opinions and feelings:

1. Be specific.
2. Describe the behavior involved or the issue.

Use appropriate non-verbal behaviors:

1. Show intensity of feelings (without losing control in terms of how you express them).
2. Look the other person in the eye.
3. Speak up clearly without hesitation.
4. Lean toward the other person.

Activities for I-Message reinforcement

- Have the class adopt a behavior norm for speaking from this I-mode. Explain that in order to learn this communication skill, it must be practiced. Have the class monitor one another, themselves, and the facilitator. Whenever anyone slips and uses a You-Message or generalizes, stop one another and discuss a better way to state your opinion or feelings. Use this practice throughout the entire class, not just this unit.

- Have students take situations in their own life and write I-Message responses to make another person aware of their feelings. Then read these messages in class and be sure they are correct and free of disguised You-Messages.

- Have the class follow-up these activities with the worksheet activity on problem solving with good communication skills (6.01 Handout: "Communicating to Solve Problems"). This activity ties in the I-Messages and the Active Listening Skills.

Communicating to Solve Problems

We are practicing communicating to solve problems using active listening and I-messages. We want to begin using these skills to solve problems in our lives.

Sometimes it is necessary to use these two skills together to send a message and then listen to what the other person heard or is having difficulty understanding. We call this gear shifting. You can also use this skill when another person is angry to help them to cool down. A dialogue may go like this:

_______ Mom: "I feel upset when I get a call from school saying that you failed your math test when you told me you had studied."
_______ Son: "But I am tired of you picking on me about school grades, I don't care if I get bad grades."
_______ Mom: "You don't care about school."
_______ Son: "No, I just can't get everything done with working at the gas station."
_______ Mom: "Your job is taking too much of your time."
_______ Son: "Yea, I am too tired to study when I come home from work."
_______ Mom: "I feel school needs to come before work if you are to graduate."
_______ Son: "I want to graduate."
_______ Mom: "I will be so proud of you when you get through school and get your diploma. I also need you to work to help pay some of the bills while you are in school."
_______ Son: "I know you need my help, Mom. Maybe I can take my books to work and study when I am not busy rather than watch T.V. I don't think my boss would mind."
_______ Mom: "That would be good if you could check it out; I would sure like to see you raise your grades."

Now on the line provided, place an "AL" if it is an active listening response or an "IM" if it is an I-Message. Read carefully to see how the problem is solved by talking to one another with caring I-Messages and then listening to what the other person has to say.

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

Tips for using the gear-shifting skill.

1. Talk about the situation, behavior, or action and not the pezrson (example: discuss the report from school, not "you are a failure because you are flunking math").
2. Tell exactly what the effects are on you of the other person's behavior (example: upset when told the son studied).
3. Be specific in your feelings, express them calmly, and stay with the exact offending behavior, not the person (example: feeling of school being more important than work).
4. If you must ask for a behavior change—give specific need.
5. Let the other person give ideas on solving the problem and listen.
6. Use the clarifying and active listening to be sure you have heard the other person.
7. Agree on the results of the problem solving.

Now take a problem you are having with another person and write a conversation between the two of you with the gear-shifting technique.

1. Give a brief description of the problem and then write down the conversation like the above example.
2. You may use the back of this paper.
3. Share your example with the class and discuss it.

Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument

Consider situations in which you find your wishes differing from those of another person. How do you usually respond to such situations?

On the following pages are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioral responses. For each pair, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is most characteristic for your own behavior.

In many cases, neither the "A" nor the "B" statement may be very typical of your behavior, but please select the response which you would be more likely to use.

1. A. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
   B. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.

2. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
   B. I attempt to deal with all of his/her and my concerns.

3. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.

4. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
   B. I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.

5. A. I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution.
   B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

6. A. I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.
   B. I try to win my position.

7. A. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
   B. I give up some points in exchange for others.

8. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   B. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out into the open.

9. A. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
   B. I make some effort to get my way.

10. A. I am firm in pursuing my goals.
    B. I try to find a compromise solution.

Reprinted from "Toward Multi-Dimensional Values in Teaching the Example of Conflict Behaviors," *Academy of Management Review*, 1977, by permission of the Academy of Management Review.

11. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out into the open.
B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.

12. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.
B. I will let him/her have some of his/her positions if I then get some of mine.

13. A. I propose a middle ground.
B. I press to get my points made.

14. A. I tell the other person my ideas and ask for his/hers.
B. I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.

15. A. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions.

16. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
B. I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.

17. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

18. A. If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.
B. I will let the other person have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.

19. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out into the open.
B. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.

20. A. I attempt to immediately work through our differences.
B. I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.

21. A. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
B. I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.

22. A. I try to find a position that is intermediate between the other person's and mine.
B. I assert my wishes.

23. A. I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
B. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.

24. A. If the other's position seems very important to them, I would try to meet their wishes.
    B. I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.

25. A. I try to show the other the logic and benefits of my position.
    B. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.

26. A. I propose a middle ground.
    B. I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all of our wishes.

27. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.
    B. If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.

28. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
    B. I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution.

29. A. I propose a middle ground.
    B. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.

30. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
    B. I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

Circle the letter which you circled on each item on the questionnaire.

1.				A	B
2.		B	A		
3.	A				B
4.			A		B
5.		A		B	
6.	B			A	
7.			B	A	
8.	A	B			
9.	B			A	
10.	A		B		
11.		A			B
12.			B	A	
13.	B		A		
14.	B	A			
15.				B	A
16.	B				A
17.	A			B	
18.			B		A
19.		A		B	
20.		A	B		
21.		B			A
22.	B		A		
23.		A		B	
24.			B		A
25.	A				B
26.		B	A		
27.				A	B
28.	A	B			
29.			A	B	
30.		B			A

Total number of items circled in each column:

______	______	______	______	______
Competing (forcing)	Collaborating (Problem Solving)	Compromising (sharing)	Avoiding (withdrawal)	Accommodating (smoothing)

Reprinted from "Toward Multi-Dimensional Values in Teaching the Example of Conflict Behaviors," *Academy of Management Review*, 1977, by permission of the Academy of Management Review.

Examples of Appropriate Use of Conflict Styles

Conflict Style	Appropriate Situations
Competing	1. When quick, decisive action is vital–e.g., emergencies. 2. On important issues where unpopular decisions need implementing—e.g. cost cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, discipline. 3. On issues vital to company welfare when you know you're right. 4. Against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior.
Collaborating	1. To find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised. 2. When your objective is to learn. 3. To merge insights from people with different perspectives. 4. To gain commitment by incorporating concerns into a consensus. 5. To work through feelings which have interfered with relationships.
Compromising	1. When goals are important, but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes. 2. When opponents with equal power are committed to mutually exclusive goals. 3. To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues. 4. To arrive at expedient solutions under time pressure. 5. As a backup when collaboration or competition is unsuccessful.
Avoiding	1. When an issue is trivial, or more important issues are pressing. 2. When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns. 3. When potential disruption outweighs the benefits of resolution. 4. To let people cool down and regain perspective. 5. When gathering information supersedes immediate information. 6. When the others can resolve the conflict more effectively. 7. When issues seem tangential or symptomatic of other issues.
Accommodating	1. When you find you are wrong—to allow a better position to be heard, to learn and to show your reasonableness. 2. When issues are more important to others than yourself—to satisfy others and maintain cooperation. 3. To build social credits for later issues. 4. To minimize loss when you are outmatched and losing. 5. When harmony and stability are especially important. 6. To allow subordinates to develop by learning from mistakes.

Reprinted from "Toward Multi-Dimensional Values in Teaching the Example of Conflict Behaviors," *Academy of Management Review*, 1977, by permission of the Academy of Management Review.

Types of Interpersonal Behavior

Assertive Behavior:

Type of interpersonal behavior in which a person stands up for his or her legitimate rights in such a way that the rights of others are not violated. Assertive behavior is an honest, direct, and appropriate expression of one's feelings, beliefs, and opinions.

Responsibility: I am responsible for my behavior, feelings, convictions, etc. You are responsible for your behavior. I'm not responsible for how you feel. You're not responsible for how I feel. You may have joint responsibility for outcomes.

Intention: To maintain integrity and self-respect while respecting others.

Belief: Everybody has a right to feel and believe as they do. Win/Win—I'm OK and you are OK.

Non-Assertive or Passive Behavior:

Type of behavior that enables the person's rights to be violated by another person.

Responsibility: Others are responsible for how I behave. You're responsible for how I feel. I am probably to blame for poor results.

Intention: To appease; to follow a course set by others. To be safe.

Belief: Your feelings and beliefs are right. Lose/Win—You're OK and I'm not OK.

Aggressive Behavior:

Type of interpersonal behavior in which a person stands up for his/her own rights in such a way that the rights of others are violated. The purpose of the behavior is to humiliate, dominate, or put the other person down rather than simply to express one's own honest emotions or thoughts.

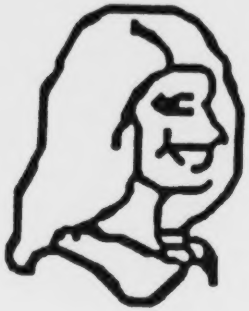
Responsibility: I am responsible to direct and shape your behavior. How you feel is not important, I can blame you for poor results.

Intention: To put down others. To win.

Belief: My feelings and beliefs are right. Win/Lose—I'm OK and you're not OK.

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Communicating



A person has an
Idea
Thought
Feeling
that s/he. . .

CODES — . . . then delivers a message of **Content** and a message of **Feeling**. — **DECODES**

The Listener . . .

. . . the message to understand the
Thought
Feeling
Idea.

The coding is done through
words, tones, and gestures.

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family*, 1985, by permission of the Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute.

Communicating

A person has an
Idea
Thought
Feeling
that s/he. . .

CODES — . . . then delivers a message of **Content** and a message of **Feeling.** — **DECODES**

The Listener . . . **DECODES** . . . the message to understand the
Thought
Feeling
Idea.

The coding is done through **words, tones, and gestures.**

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family*, 1985, by permission of the Minnesota Vocational Education Work and Family Institute.

Assertiveness

Assertiveness means being able to state your needs and desires in a straight-forward manner. This can be contrasted with passiveness, which is letting others manipulate or take advantage of you at the expense of your needs. Aggressiveness is getting what you want by pushing other people around. The assertive person is able to decide for him/herself what is right for them and go after it without violating the rights of others.

As children we were all dependent upon others for our needs. Thus, other people could control us to some extent. As adults, we learn to be self-reliant; however, we still have to cope with other people. Some of us cope by allowing others to take advantage of us until we get angry and "blow up." This is called the "passive-aggressive" method—the person who stores up angry feelings.

In order to be assertive, you must believe that *you* are the best judge of your own behavior. You have the right to say "no" when you feel it's fair. You have the right to not feel guilty about the decisions you make.

Being assertive involves a four-step process. Step one is to **recognize when you are holding in your anger or anxiety**. If you feel nervous or are clenching you jaw or your heart is pounding, it means the situation is threatening one of your needs. For instance, if it's three minutes to quitting time and your hand starts trembling when you see the boss approach, it means you recognize that he/she again wants you to work overtime and you want to say no, but are afraid to.

Step two is to **describe the situation fairly**. You must calmly tell the other person what you see. Be objective. You would say to the boss: "You've asked me to work overtime at the last minute for five of the last eight weekdays."

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Step three is **state calmly how you feel**. Don't get belligerent or afraid. Say, "This puts a strain on my home life. I'd like to get home early tonight." Don't offer excuses or unnecessary justifications. The other person will only attempt to shoot them down. Don't let them judge how you feel, just tell them where you're coming from with no apologies.

Step four is **state what you need/want or don't need/want**. Again, don't justify unnecessarily. Say it in a straight-forward, level tone. Don't mumble at the floor and don't shout in their face. Say, "I want at least four hours warning on overtime. I'll work when I can, but I have to know before lunch break."

When being assertive, you have to decide what's possible and what's fair according to each situation. Once you have decided, assertively go after it. It's scary at first, but it gets easier as you do it. The rewards are worth it.

Four Steps of Assertiveness

Step One:

Recognize when you are holding in your anger or anxiety

Step Two:

Describe the situation fairly

Step Three:

State calmly how you feel

Step Four:

State what you need/want or don't need/want

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Assertiveness Training

Women find it particularly difficult to say "no." Men may find it difficult, too—but a man is not expected to be unfailingly sympathetic, understanding, or self-sacrificing. It's women who are supposed to have special talents for aiding the distressed, for disregarding their own comfort in the face of other people's needs. Helping others is an important part of life, but that doesn't mean we must give our time and energy to anyone who asks for it. And performing helpful acts is not always the same as being truly generous.

For a gesture to be truly helpful and appreciated, it must be offered spontaneously by someone who *wants* to lend a hand. If you're constantly saying "yes" only to end up feeling exploited and unappreciated, you're probably saying "yes" for the wrong reasons.

Some Wrong Reasons for Saying "Yes"

To win approval and acceptance: We all want to be liked, and when we're feeling a bit insecure, we try extra hard to be "nice."

To convince yourself you're a good person: A woman who feels guilty is under even greater pressure to oblige. Anxious to make up for real or imagined failures, she seizes any opportunity to set things right.

To avoid hurting someone's feelings: It's hard to disappoint someone you like without feeling unhappy. But you can't govern your life so as to never hurt anyone.

To protect the family image: We all want our families to be respected, but we sometimes falsely think that means saying yes all the time.

To put others in your debt: Sometimes we put ourselves out for others in hopes they'll return the favor.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Why is it so important to learn to say "no?" If a woman constantly says "yes," ignoring her own needs while doing for others, she begins to feel the world owes her something. Vast stores of unreleased anger may lead to depression or produce skin rashes, headaches, ulcers, and other psychosomatic illnesses. As she ages, such a woman often wallows in self-pity or turns tyrant. Because she chose to spend her years meeting the needs of others without learning to say "no," she never defined herself, never really grew up.

What does "no" mean? In a two-year-old, it's an assertion of independence. Each refusal to eat his spinach or take a nap sharpens the young child's awareness that he's a separate person. In adult life a well-considered "no" serves a similar purpose. It's one way of saying "I have a right to be me." There's nothing shameful about defining the limits of your generosity and tolerance. The woman who makes selflessness a life principle is denying her own humanity. Though she behaves as if she's more noble than the people she helps, she actually sees herself as less deserving. Her time and energy are unimportant. What she doesn't understand is that the truly unselfish woman must love herself as well as others. "If it is a virtue to love my neighbor as a human being," says Erich Fromm, "it must be a virtue, and not a vice, to love myself since I am a human being too."

When to Say "No"

- Say no to anything that would make you feel bad (angry, resentful, uncomfortable, ashamed)
- Say no to thoughtless requests
- Say no to inappropriate demands
- Say no if you think it would be wrong for the other person
- Say no to violations of your own values and standards
- Say no to doing what another should do for himself
- Say no to requests that conflict with your own priorities
- Say no to committing others against their will

How to Say "No"

- Say "no" promptly before too many hopes are raised.
- Don't feel obligated to justify every refusal. You have a right to say no—often more of a right than the other person had to ask.
- Try to speak without impatience or anger. A soft refusal is hard to fight. As a matter of fact, once you learn to say no, you'll discover that many old angers dissolve. You can decline with serenity and assurance.
- Avoid getting caught up in a whole series of no's to the same person. An occasional yes to something easy will give you strength for more important refusals.
- Try to offer a counterproposal when making a difficult refusal.

Obligations to family, friends, and community are facts of adult life. A mature woman welcomes that responsibility. She gives without expecting a measurable return, knows that a difficult "yes" sometimes leads to a deeply rewarding experience. But if she values her peace of mind, she must separate legitimate demands from those that are trivial or unreasonable. A mature woman realizes that she can only be effective in helping others if she herself is a whole person. In short her first obligation is to herself.

Exercise: Yes/No

1. Sit down opposite an empty chair and relax as much as you can.

2. Think of a recent situation when you said "yes," but really wanted to say "no." Visualize as many details of the situation as you can.

3. Recall how you felt as you said "yes." What did you gain and avoid by doing it?

4. Imagine you said "no" in the same situation. Visualize how the other person would react.

5. Move to the empty chair and become the person whom you said "no" to. Respond as this person would.

6. Return to your own chair and react to what the other person just said.

7. Continue the dialogue, until you come to some resolution, paying attention to how you feel in each chair.

Assertiveness Training

When to Say "No"

- Say no to anything that would make you feel bad (angry, resentful, uncomfortable, ashamed)
- Say no to thoughtless requests
- Say no to inappropriate demands
- Say no if you think it would be wrong for the other person
- Say no to violations of your own values and standards
- Say no to doing what another should do for himself
- Say no to requests that conflict with your own priorities
- Say no to committing others against their will

How to Say "No"

- Say "no" promptly before too many hopes are raised.
- Don't feel obligated to justify every refusal. You have a right to say no—often more of a right than the other person had to ask.
- Try to speak without impatience or anger. A soft refusal is hard to fight. As a matter of fact, once you learn to say no, you'll discover that many old angers dissolve. You can decline with serenity and assurance.
- Avoid getting caught up in a whole series of no's to the same person. An occasional yes to something easy will give you strength for more important refusals.
- Try to offer a counterproposal when making a difficult refusal.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

When to Say "No"

- Say no to anything that would make you feel bad (angry, resentful, uncomfortable, ashamed)
- Say no to thoughtless requests
- Say no to inappropriate demands
- Say no if you think it would be wrong for the other person
- Say no to violations of your own values and standards
- Say no to doing what another should do for himself
- Say no to requests that conflict with your own priorities
- Say no to committing others against their will

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

How to Say "No"

- Say "no" promptly before too many hopes are raised.
- Don't feel obligated to justify every refusal. You have a right to say no—often more of a right than the other person had to ask.
- Try to speak without impatience or anger. A soft refusal is hard to fight. Decline with serenity and assurance.
- Avoid getting caught up in a whole series of no's to the same person. An occasional yes to something easy will give you strength for more important refusals.
- Try to offer a counterproposal when making a difficult refusal.

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Developing an Assertive Belief System

Developing an assertive belief system is an essential step in your attempt to behave more assertively with other people. Such a belief system is based on the idea that assertion—rather than manipulation, submission, or hostility—enriches life and leads to more satisfying personal relationships. This philosophy also involves the following ideas:

1. By standing up for ourselves and letting ourselves be known to others, we gain self-respect and respect from other people.
2. By trying to live our lives in such a way that we never hurt anyone under any circumstances, we end up hurting ourselves—and other people.
3. When we stand up for ourselves and express our honest feelings and thoughts in direct and appropriate ways, everyone usually benefits in the long run. Likewise, when we demean other people, we also demean ourselves and everyone involved usually loses in the process.
4. By sacrificing our integrity and denying our personal feelings, relationships are usually damaged or prevented from developing. Likewise, personal relationships are hurt when we try to control others through hostility, intimidation, or guilt.
5. Personal relationships become more authentic and satisfying when we share our honest reactions with other people and do not block others' sharing their reactions with us.
6. Not letting others know what we think and feel is just as selfish as not attending to other people's thoughts or feelings.
7. When we frequently sacrifice our rights, we teach other people to take advantage of us.
8. By being assertive and telling other people how their behavior affects us, we are giving them an opportunity to change their behavior, and we are showing respect for their right to know where they stand with us.

From *Responsible Assertive Behavior: Cognitive/Behavioral Procedures for Trainers* (pp. 55-56) by A.J. Lange and P. Jakubowski, 1976, Champaign, IL: Research Press. Copyright ©1976 by Research Press. Reprinted by permission.

Another part of an assertive philosophy is the view that everyone is entitled to act assertively and to express honest thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. More specifically this involves ideas such as:

1. We all have the right to respect from other people.
2. We all have the right to have needs and to have these needs be as important as other people's needs. Moreover, we have the right to ask (not demand) that other people respond to our needs and to decide whether we will take care of other people's needs.
3. We all have the right to have feelings—and to express these feelings in ways which do not violate the dignity of other people (e.g., the right to feel tired, happy, depressed, sexy, angry, lonesome, silly).
4. We all have the right to decide whether we will meet other people's expectations or whether we will act in ways which fit us, as long as we act in ways which do not violate other people's rights.
5. We all have the right to form our own opinions and to express these opinions.

Your Assertive Rights

- You have the right and responsibility to control your own life.
- You have the right to have and express your own feelings, beliefs, and opinions.
- You have the right to make and refuse requests without feeling guilty or selfish.
- You have the right to consider your own needs.
- You have the right to change your mind.
- You have the right to do what you want with your own property, mind, and body.
- You have the right to make mistakes.
- You have the right to ask for what you want.
- You have the right to ask for information.
- You have the right to be independent.
- You have the right to be left alone.
- You have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.
- You have the right to be human and not to be liked by everyone.

Reprinted from *Final Report: Nontraditional Education Component in Single Parent/Homemaker Programs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky* (1990) with permission of the School of Education, Department of Occupational Training and Development, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky.

Assertiveness Inventory Instructions

Directions: Read and follow the following four steps to the Assertiveness Inventory on the next page.

Step One: Indicate your Degree of Discomfort in each of the situations in the space provided on the left-hand side of the Inventory, using the following scale:

Discomfort Scale

0 = no discomfort
1 = a little discomfort
2 = a fair amount of discomfort
3 = much discomfort
4 = extreme discomfort

Step Two: Go back over the list of situations a second time and after each item (in the right hand column) indicate how likely you are to display the behavior listed, using the following scale:

Response Probability Scale

0 = always do it
1 = usually do it
2 = do it about half the time
3 = rarely do it
4 = never do it

Step Three: Give yourself an assertiveness rating by totaling the points in the right-hand column. A score of 20-40 would be Good; a score of 41-60 would be Fair; a score of 61-100 would indicate a Needs Work rating.

Step Four: Go back over the listing of situations one last time and circle the ones you would like to handle more assertively.

Reprinted from "An Assertion Inventory for Use in Assessment and Research," *Behavior Therapy*, Vol. 6, 1975, pp. 550-556, by permission of the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy.

Assertiveness Inventory

Degree of Discomfort		Response Probability
________	1. Refusing a request to borrow something you value (homework, clothing, money, etc.)	________
________	2. Complimenting a friend	________
________	3. Asking a favor	________
________	4. Resisting sales pressure	________
________	5. Apologizing when you've made the mistake	________
________	6. Turning down a date	________
________	7. Telling a person who is very close to you that something she/he says or does bothers you	________
________	8. Asking for a date with a person	________
________	9. Admitting you don't understand what is being discussed and asking for further explanation	________
________	10. Disagreeing with the opinion of a friend	________
________	11. Applying for a job	________
________	12. Resisting pressure to drink or smoke when you are not interested	________
________	13. Talking with a person about his/her criticism of your behavior/work/etc.	________
________	14. Asking for the return of borrowed items	________
________	15. Requesting expected service in a store/restaurant/school when it is not forthcoming	________
________	16. Returning bad merchandise to a store	________
________	17. Resisting sexual overtures when you are not interested	________
________	18. Telling someone good news about yourself	________
________	19. Receiving compliments	________
________	20. Admitting that you are afraid and asking for acceptance	________

Reprinted from *Final Report: Nontraditional Education Component in Single Parent/Homemaker Programs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky* (1990) with permission of the School of Education, Department of Occupational Training and Development, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky.

Self-Assessment of Assertiveness

Goals:

1. To be more aware of the different types of assertive behaviors that can be used with different types of people

2. To become knowledgeable about one's current level of assertiveness

3. To be able to compare one's assertion score with reports of white assertiveness levels

4. To designate behaviors relevant to select persons in need of attention during training

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Adult Self-Expression Scale Worksheet
Adult Self-Expression Scale Score Calculation Sheet
Pencils
Pocket calculator to share

Process:

1. Trainer distributes to each participant the Adult Self-Expression Scale (ASES) Worksheet and Score Calculation Sheet. Trainer then explains that the scale measures different types of assertive behaviors used with different types of people. While completing the scale, participants may call to mind situations they had not thought of recently but would like to change.

2. Trainer instructs participants in self-scoring procedures for the ASES, as explained on the Score Calculation Sheet, and asks participants to calculate their score.

3. Average scores range between 107-120. Ask participants to discuss how they felt while using the scale. What situations came to mind? What non-assertive behaviors might they like to change? What behaviors do they feel good about?

Reprinted by permission of John P. Galassi, Jr. and James G. Hollandsworth, Jr. Instructions adapted by Margaret A. Nash.

The Adult Self-Expression Scale

The following questions are meant to develop a scale on how you express yourself. If a situation does not apply to you, reply as you think you would in the situation. After each item check the answer that best describes your choice.

	Almost Always or Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never or Rarely
1. Do you ignore it when someone pushes in front of you in line?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Do you find it difficult to ask a friend to do a favor for you?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. If your boss or supervisor makes what you consider to be an unreasonable request, do you have difficulty saying "no"?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. Are you reluctant to speak to an attractive acquaintance of the opposite sex?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
5. Is it difficult for you to refuse unreasonable requests from your parents?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Do you find it difficult to accept compliments from your boss or supervisor?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
7. Do you express your negative feelings to others when it is appropriate?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
8. Do you freely volunteer information or opinions in discussions with people whom you do not know very well?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
9. If there was a public figure whom you greatly admired and respected at a large social gathering, would you make an effort to introduce yourself?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Reprinted by permission of John P. Galassi, Jr. and James G. Hollandsworth, Jr.

	Almost Always or Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never or Rarely
10. How often do you openly express justified feelings of anger to your parents?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
11. If you have a friend of whom you parents do not approve, do you make an effort to help them get to know one another better?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
12. If you were watching a TV program in which you were very interested and a close relative was disturbing you, would you ask them to be quiet?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
13. Do you play an important part in deciding how you and your close friends spend your leisure time together?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
14. If you are angry at your spouse/boyfriend or girlfriend, is it difficult for you to tell them?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
15. If a friend calls 15 minutes before he/she is supposed to pick you up and says that he/she cannot make it, do you express your annoyance?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
16. If you approve of something your parents do, do you express your approval?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
17. If in a rush you stop by a supermarket to pick up a few items, would you ask to go before someone in the check-out line?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
18. Do you find it difficult to refuse the requests of others?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Almost Always or Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never or Rarely
19. If your boss or supervisor expresses opinions with which you strongly disagree, do you venture to state your point of view?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
20. If you have a close friend whom your partner dislikes and constantly criticizes, would you inform them that you disagree and tell them of your friend's assets?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
21. Do you find it difficult to ask favors of others?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
22. If food which is not to your satisfaction was served in a good restaurant, would you bring it to the waiter's attention?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
23. Do you tend to drag out your apologies?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
24. When necessary, do you find it difficult to ask favors of your parents?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
25. Do you insist that others do their fair share of the work?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
26. Do you have difficulty saying no to salespersons?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
27. Are you reluctant to speak up in a discussion with a small group of friends?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
28. Do you express anger or annoyance to your boss or supervisor when it is justified?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
29. Do you compliment and praise others?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
30. Do you have difficulty asking a close friend to do an important favor if it will cause them some inconvenience?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Almost Always or Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never or Rarely
31. If a close relative makes what you consider to be an unreasonable request, do you have difficulty saying no?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
32. If your boss or supervisor makes a statement that you consider untrue, do you question it aloud?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
33. If you find yourself becoming fond of a friend, do you have difficulty expressing these feelings to that person?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
34. Do you have difficulty exchanging a purchase with which you are dissatisfied?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
35. If someone in authority interrupts you in the middle of an important conversation, do you request that the person wait until you have finished?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
36. If a person of the opposite sex whom you have been wanting to meet directs attention to you at a party, do you take the initiative in beginning the conversation?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
37. Do you hesitate to express resentment to a friend who has unjustifiably criticized you?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
38. If your parents wanted you to come home for a weekend visit and you had made important plans, would you change your plans?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
39. Are you reluctant to speak up in a discussion or debate?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

	Almost Always or Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never or Rarely
40. If a friend who has borrowed $5.00 from you seems to have forgotten about it, is it difficult for you to remind this person?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
41. If your boss or supervisor teases you to the point that it is no longer fun, do you have difficulty expressing your displeasure?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
42. If your spouse/boyfriend or girlfriend is blatantly unfair, do you find it difficult to say something about it to them?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
43. If a clerk in a store waits on someone who has come in after you when you are in a rush, do you call his/her attention to the matter?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
44. If you lived in an apartment and the owner of the apartment failed to make certain repairs after it had been brought to the owner's attention, would you insist on it?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
45. Do you find it difficult to ask your boss or supervisor to let you off early?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
46. Do you have difficulty verbally expressing love or affection to your spouse/boyfriend or girlfriend?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
47. Do you readily express your opinions to others?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
48. If a friend makes what you consider to be an unreasonable request, are you able to refuse?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

The Adult Self-Expression Score Calculation Sheet

Directions for scoring:

1. Enter your responses on the Adult Self-Expression Scale in the appropriate box for each item.
2. Check to see that there is a response for every item. If a response it missing for an item, check the 2 box for that item. If more than four or five items have no response, the results may be invalid.
3. Notice that the values for approximately half of the items have been reversed.
4. Total response values for each column on this Score Calculation Sheet by entering the sum in the blank space beneath.
5. Total the four column sums to obtain the ASES score.

1. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
2. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
3. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
4. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
5. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
6. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
7. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
8. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
9. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
10. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
11. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
12. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)

Total: __________

13. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
14. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
15. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
16. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
17. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
18. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
19. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
20. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
21. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
22. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
23. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
24. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)

Total: __________

25. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
26. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
27. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
28. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
29. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
30. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
31. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
32. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
33. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
34. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
35. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
36. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)

Total: __________

37. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
38. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
39. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
40. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
41. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
42. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
43. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
44. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
45. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
46. (0) (1) (2) (3) (4)
47. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)
48. (4) (3) (2) (1) (0)

Total: __________

Total Column 1: __________
Total Column 2: __________
Total Column 3: __________
Total Column 4: __________
Total Score: __________

Reprinted by permission of John P. Galassi, Jr. and James G. Hollandsworth, Jr.

Avoiding Self-Defeating Behaviors in Communication

Things to Do	Things to Avoid
1. If you are wondering what someone's thinking, ASK! You could be wrong. **Example**: Someone seems to be treating you differently than usual. You don't know if it's you or something else on the person's mind. You say, "Have I done something that upset you?"	Don't assume you know what someone else is thinking.
2. Be open about what's on your mind even when it seems "silly." (Express fears, questions, wishes, hurt feelings, etc.)	Don't judge your thoughts or feelings. It is OK to think and feel and to express yourself when some people may not understand.
3. Be direct about your self-doubts. Everyone has them. Expressing self-doubts can help you manage them. **Example**: "I wish I could lose some weight more easily" vs. "I would scare somebody on the beach if I put on a bathing suit!"	Avoid Self-Putdowns.
4. Be direct about what you want or need from others. **Example**: "I need a hug right now" vs. "I wish you were more affectionate once in a while."	DON'T manipulate others by secretly trying to get them to give you what you want/need.
5. Begin your sentences with "I." **Example**: "I feel hurt when you don't notice something special I've done" vs. "you should notice more."	Beginning sentences with "you" can make people feel that they have to defend themselves.

Written by Andrea Belkins, Lansing Community College. Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

Things to Do	Things to Avoid
6. Be willing to look at weaknesses as well as strengths in yourself and own them. Express what you like about yourself and your strengths. **Example**: "I know that I have a tendency to jump to conclusions and I am working on it."	DON'T defend your particular weaknesses. Everyone has both strengths and weaknesses.
7. Apologize when you feel like doing so (and not when you don't feel like doing so). **Example**: "After I thought about our conversation, I realized that I was not fair to you. I am sorry."	Apologies, when they are sincere, are a responsible way to show ourselves and others that we do make mistakes and can rectify them. We are not perfect—neither is anyone else.
8. When talking with someone about an emotional subject, try to keep emotions under control by stating how you feel rather than showing it with shouting, etc. **Example**: I feel hurt and angry right now, and I will try to explain why.	Avoid overreacting or withdrawing from emotional subjects. Nothing will be accomplished.
9. Check it out with the other person when you are not sure you understand what they had said. **Example**: "I am not sure I understand what you said—I could take it one or two ways. Would you clarify it for me?"	It is OK to ask for clarification from another person about what they said.
10. Be willing to hear both positive and negative from people. **Example**: "It is hard for me to hear you say that about me, but I will think about it," or "Thank you for saying that, it makes me feel good."	DON'T expect all positive or all negative from people.

How to Achieve Your Goals . . . Assertiveness

Fogging:	I acknowledge partial truth. I remain the judge of my decisions.
Free Information:	I give cues and pick them up to keep the exchange going.
Broken Record:	I calmly repeat my wants over and over. I am persistent. I don't need to fall into verbal traps and argumentative baiting.
Negative Inquiry:	I am comfortable seeking criticism in order to get honest negative feelings out of another.
Workable Compromise:	I am willing to work out an acceptable compromise unless important principles are at stake.
Negative Assertion:	I strongly and sympathetically agree with hostile or constructive criticism of negative qualities.
Self-Disclosure:	I comfortably disclose aspects of me and my life that used to cause anxiety or guilt.

Reprinted from Manuel J. Smith, *When I Say No, I Feel Guilty*, 1985, by permission of Bantam Books.

Assertiveness With Style

Assertive Body Language

Practice with the mirror will be very important as you follow these five basic rules:

1. Maintain direct eye contact.
2. Maintain an erect body posture.
3. Speak clearly, audibly and firmly.
4. Don't whine or have an apologetic tone to your voice.
5. Make use of gestures and facial expression for emphasis.

Ways to Encounter Blocking Gambits

The final step to becoming an assertive person is learning how to avoid manipulation. Inevitably, you will encounter blocking gambits from those who seek to ignore your assertive requests. The following techniques are proven ways of overcoming the standard blocking gambits:

Broken record: Calmly repeating your point without getting sidetracked by irrelevant issues (Yes, but . . . Yes, I know, but my point is . . . I agree, but . . . Yes, but I was saying . . . Right, but I'm still not interested.)

Assertive Agreement: Responding to a criticism by admitting an error when you have made a mistake, but separating that mistake from you as a bad person. (Yes, I did forget our lunch date. I'm usually more responsible.)

Assertive Inquiry: Prompting criticism in order to gather additional information for your side of the argument. (I understand you don't like the way I acted at the meeting last night. What is it that bothered you? What is it about me that you feel is pushy? What is it about my speaking out that bothers you?)

Content-to-Process Shift: Shifting the focus of the discussion from the topic to an analysis of what is going on between the two of you. (We're getting off the point now. We've been derailed into talking about old issues. You appear angry at me.)

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report,* June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Clouding: Appearing to give ground without actually doing so. Agree with the person's argument, but don't agree to change. (You may be right, I probably could be more generous. Perhaps I shouldn't be so confrontational, but . . .)

Defusing: Ignoring the content of someone's anger, and putting off further discussion until he has calmed down. (I can see that you're very upset and angry right now, let's discuss it later this afternoon.)

Circuit Breaker: Responding to provocative criticism with one word, or very clipped statements. (Yes . . . no . . . perhaps.)

Assertive Irony: Responding to hostile criticism positively. (Answer, "You're a real loudmouth," with "Thank you.")

Assertive Delay: Putting off a response to a challenging statement until you are calm, and able to deal with it appropriately. (Yes . . . very interesting point . . . I'll have to reserve judgement on that . . . I don't want to talk about that right now.)

It is helpful to prepare yourself against a number of typical blocking gambits that will be used to attack and derail your assertive requests. Some of the most troublesome blocking gambits include:

Laughing It Off: Your assertion is responded to with a joke. (Only three weeks late? I've got to work on being less punctual.) Use the Content to Process Shift (Humor is getting off the point.) And the Broken Record (Yes, but . . .).

Accusing Gambit: You are blamed for the problem. (You're always so late cooking dinner, I'm too tired to do the dishes afterward.) Use Clouding (That may be so, but you are still breaking your commitment). Or simply disagree (8:00 is not too late for the dishes).

The Beat-Up: Your assertion is responded to with a personal attack, such as, "Who are you to worry about being interrupted; you're the biggest loudmouth around here." The best strategies to use are Assertive Irony (Thank you) in conjunction with the Broken Record or Defusing (I can see you're angry right now, let's talk about it after the meeting).

Delaying Gambit: Your assertion is met with, "Not now, I'm too tired" or "Another time, maybe." Use the Broken Record or insist on setting a specific time when the problem can be discussed.

Why Gambit: Every assertive statement is blocked with a series of "why" questions, such as, "Why do you feel that way . . . I still don't know why you want to go . . . Why did you change your mind?" The best response is to use the Content-to-Process Shift. ("That isn't the point. The issue is that I'm not willing to go tonight." Or the Broken Record.

Self Pity Gambit: Your assertion is met with tears and the covert message that you are being sadistic. Try to keep going through your script using Assertive Agreement. (I know this is causing you pain, but I need to get this resolved.)

Quibbling: The other person wants to debate with you about the legitimacy of what you feel, or the magnitude of the problem, etc. Use the Content-to-Process Shift. (We're quibbling now, and have gotten off the main concern.) With the assertion of your right to feel the way you do.

Threats: You are threatened with statements like, "If you keep harping at me like this, you're going to need another boyfriend." Use the Circuit Breaker (Perhaps) and Assertive Inquiry (What is it about my requests that bother you?), as well as Content-to-Process Shift (This seems to be a threat) or defusing.

Denial: You are told, "I didn't do that" or "You've really misinterpreted me." Assert what you have observed and experienced, and use Clouding. (It may seem that way to you, but I've observed . . .).

Techniques for Assertiveness

1. "I" statements—"I'm having trouble following these instructions," not "You are confusing." "I want some feedback from you about this report." "I'd like to meet for lunch."

2. Changing our self messages—Assertive Chant, e.g., saying to yourself, "I have a right to get what I pay for." Pats on your back for being assertive.

3. Broken record—acknowledging the other's serious point and repeating, for example, "other people may not have objected to the noise, but I'd really like you to turn down your radio."

4. Relaxation—Physical relaxation or calm scene.

5. Empathy—Recognizing and reflecting other's feelings–checking perceptions, for example, "so as far as you're concerned, if I don't work overtime every day I'm not doing a good job."

6. Workable compromise (finding a way where you both can win)—especially important with another assertive person. "All right, I'll go to the restaurant you pick this time but next time, I get to choose."

7. Selective ignoring—"I simply won't respond if you continue to criticize my friends."

8. Setting limits—"I'd be happy to hear your criticisms when I'm finished with my client." "I don't want to go out with you."

9. Expressing positive feelings—"I really enjoy sharing with you."

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

Steps in Asserting Yourself

1. Notice body cues that tell when you need to be assertive.
2. Decide what you want the other person to stop doing, keep doing, or start doing and do the same for yourself.
3. Evaluate the long and short range consequences of asserting yourself. Decide whether to assert yourself.
4. Ask for what you want directly, succinctly and with appropriate body language.
5. Persist until a workable compromise has been reached or you feel you've reached a brick wall.
6. If you've reached a brick wall, look for other routes to what you want.

Asserting Yourself

Exercise

What are some feelings or body cues that tell me I'm being nonassertive or aggressive?

Where are areas where I have trouble being assertive?

Describe one situation this last week when you were assertive.

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

The Components of Assertive Behavior

Increasingly systematic observations of assertive behavior have led many behavioral scientists to conclude that there are a number of elements which constitute an assertive act. In our work helping others to develop greater assertiveness, we have given particular attention to these components:

Eye Contact: Looking directly at another person when you are speaking to him/her is an effective way of declaring that you are sincere about what you are saying, and that it is directed to the person.

Body Posture: The "weight" of your messages to others will be increased if you face the person, stand or sit appropriately close to him, lean forward toward him, hold your head erect.

Gestures: A message accented with appropriate gestures takes on an added emphasis (over-enthusiastic gesturing can be a distraction).

Facial Expression: Ever see someone trying to express anger while smiling or laughing? It doesn't come across. Effective assertions require an expression that agrees with the message.

Timing: Spontaneous expression will generally be your goal since hesitation may diminish the effect of an assertion. Judgment is necessary, however, to select an appropriate occasion, for example, such as speaking to your boss in the privacy of his office, rather than in front of a group of his subordinates where he may need to respond defensively.

Content: We save this obvious dimension of assertiveness for last to emphasize that, although *what* you say is clearly important, it is often less important than most of us generally believe. We encourage a fundamental honesty in interpersonal communication, and spontaneity of expression. In our view, that means saying forcefully, "I'm damn mad about what you did!" rather than "You're an S.O.B.!" People who have for years hesitated because they "didn't know what to say" have found the practice of saying *something* to express their feelings *at the time* to be a valuable step toward greater spontaneous assertiveness.

One further word about content. We do encourage you to express your own feelings—and to *accept responsibility for them*. Note the difference in the above example between "I'm mad" and "You're an S.O.B." It is not necessary to put the other person down (aggressive) in order to express your feelings (assertive).

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Your imagination can carry you to a wide variety of situations which demonstrate the importance of the *manner* in which you express your assertions. Let it suffice to say that the time you may be spending *thinking* about "just the right words" will be better spent *making* those assertions! The ultimate goal is expressing yourself, honestly and spontaneously, in a manner "right" for you.

Voice Tone, Inflection, Volume: A whispered monotone will seldom convince another person that you mean business, while a shouted epithet will bring his defenses into the path of communication. A level, well-modulated conversational statement is convincing without intimidating.

Ready now? If you've come this far, you are probably ready to begin taking steps toward increasing your own assertiveness. We know you can succeed. The rewards far exceed the effort required.

Components of the Assertive Response

1. Eye contact
2. Body posture
3. Facial expression
4. Voice tone
5. Timing
6. Content
7. Context

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

Components of the Assertive Response

1. Eye contact
2. Body posture
3. Facial expression
4. Voice tone
5. Timing
6. Content
7. Context

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

Activity: Are You Someone Who . . . ?

Objective To identify one's reactions to conflict

Groups Size Small groups of four to six people

Time Required Ten to thirty minutes

Activity Sheet *Are You Someone Who . . . ?*

Physical Setting Small groups of tables and chairs

Content and Process

1. Introduce the purpose of the activity.
2. Review with the participatns how styles of behaving are developed. Distribute the activity sheet.
3. Ask participants to recall several different conflicts they experienced recently. (You could refer to the *Conflict Chart*, if used previously.) Then add a checkmark in that column if they generally react to conflict that way.
4. Next have participants put an asterisk in the column opposite each type of reaction they think is most helpful in a conflict situation.
5. Then have the participants identify the types of reactions they would like to develop and put the "greater than" symbol (>) in that column.
6. In small groups, participants discuss the following questions with one another:
   a. Which types of reaction do I generally use when I face conflict?
   b. Would others who know me agree with this perception?
   c. Which of my styles of reacting were most appropriate for the conflict situation I was facing at the time? Which were inappropriate?
   d. Which type would I like to develop more completely for using with future conflicts?
   e. Are any types more common to men? women? adult children of alcoholics? military people? counselors?

Reprinted from Dr. Lois B. Hart, *Learning from Conflict, A Handbook for Trainers and Group Leaders*, 2nd ed., 1991, Human Resource Development Press, 22 Amherst Rd., Amherst, MA 01002.

Are You Someone Who . . . ?

Type	Behaviors	Favorite Phrases	✓	*	>
Defensive	Justifies and defends position	"Let me explain." "Yes, but. . . ." "You don't understand."			
Fighter	Fights back, threatens, punishes, seeks revenge, insults	"Oh, yeah?" "Says who?"			
Angry	Quickly reacts with angry words				
God	Dictates the resolution, uses power of established authority	"Of course I'm right." "Do it my way because I'm the (boss, parent)."			
Diverter	Diverts discussion entirely or focuses on superficial issues, postpones conflict, complains to third party	"That's not the real problem." "Let's discuss this later."			
Avoider	Avoids or ignores conflicts, doesn't become involved in situations that are conflict prone	"Let's forget it." "That doesn't bother me."			
Harmonizer	Smooths over conflict; emphasizes harmony, peace, and warmth	"This isn't important enough to fight over. Both of us are right." "We all need to (work, live) together."			
Apologizer	Expresses regret; assumes blame	"I'm sorry." "I was wrong."			
Abdicator	Agrees with other person, feels it is hopeless and gives in	"You're right." "Oh well, it's hopeless."			
Crier	Tears flow easily	"When you . . . I feel. . . ." "I'm feeling. . . ."			
Negotiator	Tries to find a compromise; bargains with people in the conflict	"Let's talk this over so we can find a solution."			

Reprinted from Dr. Lois B. Hart, *Learning from Conflict, A Handbook for Trainers and Group Leaders*, 2nd ed., 1991, Human Resource Development Press, 22 Amherst Rd., Amherst, MA 01002.

Conflict Chart for General Use

Person	Causes of Conflict	Methods Used		Who Won?			
		By Me	By Other(s)	I Did	They Did	We Both Won	We Both Lost
Stranger							
Acquaintance							
Close friend							
Spouse							
Own child							
Own parent							
Boss							
Colleague							
Subordinate							
Client/Customer							

Reprinted from Dr. Lois B. Hart, *Learning from Conflict, A Handbook for Trainers and Group Leaders*, 2nd ed., 1991, Human Resource Development Press, 22 Amherst Rd., Amherst, MA 01002.

Assertive Techniques

Think of a situation in which you are not assertive now. What are some techniques you could use?

Think of a situation in which you want something from another person. Ask yourself:

> What behaviors do I want the person to keep?
> . . . to quit?
> . . . to start doing?
>
> What behaviors do I want to keep?
> . . . to quit?
> . . . to start doing?
>
> What's the least I'd settle for?
>
> What's the real least I could live with?
>
> If my initial approach to the other person doesn't work, what else could I do?

Group Responsibilities:

1. Support each other.

2. Give each other feedback about how you are coming across.

3. Provide a chance for everyone in the group to work on becoming more assertive.

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

Role Playing Assertive Behavior

Situation 1:

Your friend has just arrived an hour late for dinner. He/she did not call to let you know that he/she would be detained. You are annoyed about his/her lateness. You say:

a. Come on in. Dinner's on the table.
_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. I've been waiting for an hour. I would have appreciated your calling to let me know you would be late.
_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. You've got a lot of nerve coming late. That's the last time I invite you.
_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Situation 2:

A co-worker has just criticized your spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend. You feel the criticism is unjustified. You say:

a. Shut up. You're stupid and prejudiced.
_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. Well, I see what you mean.
_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. I feel your criticism is unfair. He/she is not like that at all.
_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Situation 3:

A friend has just complimented you on your new suit. It's the first time you've worn it and you really like it. You say:

a. Thank you.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. This? It's nothing special.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. Well . . . I picked it up at a sale . . . .

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Situation 4:

You are returning a faulty item to the department store. You bought a shirt/blouse. When you took it home, you found a misweave in it. You do not want the item as it is. The clerk has just said no one will ever notice it. You say:

a. Well, I'd still like to return it or exchange it. I do not want this one.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. Look, give me my money. I don't have all day for you to waste my time.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. Well, are you sure no one will notice it?

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Situation 5:

Your parents just called and said they are coming to visit tonight. You already made plans for the evening that you do not want to break. You say:

a. Mom, I've seen you twice this week. Enough is enough. You are always bugging me. You're a pain.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. Sure, I'd be glad to see you tonight, but couldn't you come tomorrow?

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. Mom, not tonight. I already have plans for the evening.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Situation 6:

You'd like your child to go down the block and pick up a package at your friend's house. You say:

a. Billy, I'd like it if you would go over to Mrs. Smith's and pick up a package for me. I'd appreciate it if you could do it by 3 o'clock.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. If you aren't too busy, well . . . will you be going to Mrs. Smith's today?

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. Hey, it's about time you did something worthwhile. Go down to Mrs. Smith's and pick up a package for me. No back talk. Stop being such a lazy thing. Go on.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Situation 7:

A co-worker keeps giving you all of his/her work to do. You've decided to put an end to this. Your co-worker has just asked you to do some more of his/her work. You say:

a. I'm kind of busy. But if you can't get it done, I guess I can help you.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. Forget it. It's about time you do it. You treat me like your slave. You're an inconsiderate S.O.B.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. No, Sue/Tom, I'm not going to do any more of your work. I'm tired of doing both my work and your work.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Situation 8:

A new person/family has just moved in next door. You really want to meet him/her/them.

a. You smile as your neighbor(s) walk by, but say nothing.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

b. You go next door and say, "Hi, I'm Sue/Tom. I live next door. Welcome to the neighborhood. I'm glad to meet you."

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

c. You watch your neighbor through your window.

_____ assertive
_____ nonassertive
_____ aggressive

Competency 7.0

Skills to effective listening

7.01 Identify listening skills.
7.02 Identify barriers to listening.
7.03 Demonstrate effective listening skills.

Competency 7.0
Overview

Few people think of listening as a skill. Yet, how we listen affects all of our relationships—with family, on the job, in school, and with others. Listening well lessens the chances of misunderstandings about job expectations, school assignments, or family matters.

This competency is designed to help participants develop effective listening skills. Participants completing Competency 7.0: Skills to Effective Listening will be able to:

7.01 Identify listening skills
7.02 Identify barriers to listening
7.03 Demonstrate effective listening skills

Indicator 7.01 provides an overview of various listening strengths and weaknesses. Indicator 7.02 focuses on barriers to effective listening. In Indicator 7.03, participants assess their listening skills to determine their own strengths and weaknesses. Through classroom activities, participants have an opportunity to practice and demonstrate their listening skills.

Competency 7.0: Skills to Effective Listening

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
7.01	Identify listening skills	Lecture; discussion	*Assessing and Improving Your Listening Skills*
7.02	Identify barriers to listening	Discussion; role play	*Ten Keys to Effective Listening (note accompanying overhead)*
7.03	Demonstrate effective listening skills	Activity	*How Do You Rate as a Listener?*
		Discussion; role play	*Active Listening Skills*
		Activity	*Robbery Report*

Assessing and Improving Your Listening Skills

Are you a good listener? Of course you are. After all, you've been listening to people all your life.

Although we seldom hear anyone admit to being a poor listener, considerable evidence suggests that we really do not listen as well as we should. Most of us find it difficult to focus our attention on others and their comments. Even though we spend far more time listening than we do reading, writing, or talking, few of us really hear what is being said.

Such a finding is unfortunate since, as school administrators, we earn our living by communicating, and listening is the most essential communication skill of all.

Fortunately, listening is a learned behavior and, as such, can be developed and improved upon. Awareness of our listening habits and skills is a first step toward improving them. Of course, essential to the listening process is a willingness to take the time to listen and to really care about the other person and what the other person has to say. Actually, there is no better way to convey that you are truly interested in other people than by taking the time to listen to them.

Toward More Effective Listening

Listening errors can be grouped into three categories: disconcerting manner, inappropriate verbal responses, and interruptions. By learning to avoid listening pitfalls, administrators accomplish two goals.

First, they gain clues that will help them to better understand and help the other person. Listening demonstrates to other people that you care about them and what it is they have to say, thus inclining them to listen to you.

Reprinted from Andrew V. Beale, "Assessing and Improving Your Listening Skills," National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Bulletin, March, 1990, Vol. 74, No. 524, by permission of NASSP.

Second, talking reduces frustration. Many problems can be resolved merely by giving the other person an opportunity to "talk it out." Good listening skills, then, are helpful in building rapport and solving conflicts.

A Listening Manner

The Listener's manner includes a whole host of nonverbal behaviors, including facial expressions, posture, gestures, and eye contact. Mehrabian (1971) reported that more than half a message is conveyed nonverbally. Thus, when you tell someone, "I'm listening," do your nonverbal behaviors bear witness to your words?

Okum (1987) and Brammer (1988) referred to the physical behaviors used while listening as "attending skills." Effective attending skills communicate that the listener is honestly interested in the other person. They are intended to encourage the other person to open up and to begin to verbalize his or her ideas or feelings freely. Attending behaviors also have a powerful effect on the other person.

Looking at the other person, usually at his or her eyes, conveys interest, because eyes are one of our main ways of communicating. However, eye contact is not a fixed stare. Look naturally at the other person while he or she is talking.

The distance between you and the other person is another important attending component. According to Brammer (1988), a comfortable listening distance is three or four feet; much closer is uncomfortable, much further is too distant.

Of course, having a desk or some other piece of furniture come between people merely places an additional barrier in the way of open, direct communication.

Another element of attending is posture. Forward body tilt and a natural, relaxed manner are preferred. Finally, concentrate on making sure gestures accurately convey the message of caring and concern you wish to communicate.

Your Verbal Responses

As a listener, do your verbal responses make it easy or difficult for the other person to talk about whatever it is he or she wishes to discuss?

Some of the more common roadblocks to effective communication include advice giving, counter-argument, questioning, and diverting. These types of responses tend to block further communication. They slow down, inhibit, or completely stop the two-way process of communication that is so necessary in establishing good relationships.

How do you verbally communicate acceptance and a desire to help others? One way is by being quiet. Silence—passive listening—is a powerful message that can make another person feel genuinely accepted and encouraged to share more openly.

Of course, being silent does not prove that you are really paying attention and hearing what is being said. It helps to nod, smile, frown, and use verbal cues like "uh huh," "uhmm," and "I see" as verbal pats on the back that encourage the other to continue talking while you listen.

Verbal responses like "What's happening," "Tell me more," and "What brings you," serve as door-openers to help the other person begin to talk or to talk more. Door-openers, unlike direct questions, make it easier for the other person to talk about what is on his or her mind, whereas questions tend to direct the conversation in the way you would like for it to proceed, which may not always be the direction preferred by the other person.

When questions are used to elicit necessary information, keep the questions simple and understandable. Avoid asking multiple questions that only seem to confuse the other person.

Good listeners often tie together into one statement several ideas and feelings expressed by the other person. Summarizing what has been said serves as an effective check on the accuracy of your understanding. It also tends to move the conversation along.

A good listener is more concerned with learning what the other person has to say than he or she is on expressing his or her own views. An effective listener keeps the focus of the conversation on the other person. What you say and do not say has a strong bearing on your effectiveness as a listener. The willingness to bite one's tongue and "just listen" is a skill that can be learned, but not without much hard work.

Avoid Interrupting Others

As basic as it may seem, many of us fail to realize that we cannot listen and talk at the same time. Our preoccupation with our own thoughts and ideas often shifts the focus from the other person to ourselves and reduces our potential for listening.

When you impede the flow of conversation by needlessly interrupting the other person, the other person may find it difficult to get back on the main topic. Evans et al. (1984) also noted that people who are interrupted are often not inclined to share important information with someone whose thoughts and attention are obviously elsewhere.

Refrain from interrupting. Instead, allow other persons to present their thoughts or concerns in the manner that best suits them. Otherwise, they may come to believe you do not think what they are saying is important.

One of the most common reasons for interrupting the speaker is to get more information so we can solve the other persons' problem for them. In effect, we have "bought in." Buying-in means we have taken it upon ourselves to solve, rectify, or otherwise take care of the speaker's concerns (even if it means we do so based upon partial and/or faulty information).

Sometimes we become so concerned with expediting matters that we fail to take the time to really listen and fully comprehend the issues involved.

Be careful not to turn the conversation back to yourself or to relate too many personal anecdotes. "Me too-isms" cause us to interrupt the speaker so that we might share a supposedly relevant tidbit from our own life to show that we have experienced the same feeling, problem, situation, etc.

While it is sometimes comforting to the other person to know that he or she is not alone, most people perceive their problems as uniquely their own and resent your presuming to understand based upon so little information.

In the final analysis, interrupting the speaker to share a similar experience is seldom welcomed and does little to establish rapport or convey a true sense of understanding. "I know exactly how you feel," or "the very same thing happened to me" often fall on unbelieving ears. Better to say nothing than alienate the other by inane comments.

Rather than sharing your "me too-isms" with the speaker, focus more on listening and understanding what it is the other person is saying and feeling. A good listener uses the word "you" far more than the words "I" and "me."

Conclusion

It has been estimated that individuals spend 40-45 percent of their waking hours listening (Mehrabian, 1971). It has also been demonstrated that few people do an effective job of listening. The good news, however, is that listening skills can be learned and refined.

Remember: Communication itself is unavoidable. Effective communication *is* possible, and listening is at the very heart of effective communication.

References

Brammer, L.M. *The Helping Relationship: Process and Skills.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1988.

Carkhuff, R.R. *The Skills of Helping.* Amherst, Mass.: Human Resource Development Press, 1979.

Egan, G. *The Skilled Helper.* Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1986.

Evans, D.R.; Hearn, M.T.; Uhlemann, M.R.; and Ivey, A.E. *Essential Interviewing.* Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1984.

Gordon, T. *Teacher Effectiveness Training.* New York: Wyden, 1974.

Hoy, W.K., and Miskel, C. G. *Educational Administration.* New York: Random House, 1982.

Lucio, W.H., and McNeil, J.D. *Supervision in Thought and Action.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979.

Mehrabian, A. *Silent Messages.* Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1971.

Okum, B.F. *Effective Helping.* Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1987.

Steil, L.K. "Secrets of Being a Better Listener." *U.S. News and World Report,* May 26, 1980.

Ten Keys to Effective Listening

	Ten Keys to Effective Listening	The Bad Listener	The Good Listener
1.	Find areas of interest.	Tunes out dry subjects.	Looks for benefits and opportunities; asks "What's in it for me?"
2.	Judge content, not delivery.	Tunes out if delivery is poor.	Judges content; skips over delivery errors.
3.	Hold your fire.	Tends to enter into argument.	Doesn't judge until message is complete.
4.	Listen for ideas.	Listens for facts.	Listens for central themes.
5.	Be flexible.	Takes intensive notes using only one system.	Takes fewer notes; uses several different systems, depending on speaker.
6.	Work at listening.	Shows no energy output. Attention is faked.	Works hard, exhibits active body state.
7.	Resist distractions.	Distracted easily.	Fights or avoids distractions; tolerates bad habits; knows how to concentrate.
8.	Exercise your mind.	Resists difficult, expository material; seeks light, recreational material.	Uses heavier material as exercise for the mind.
9.	Keep your mind open.	Reacts to emotional words.	Interprets color words; does not get hung up on them.
10.	Capitalize on the fact that thought is faster than speech.	Tends to daydream with slow speakers.	Challenges, anticipates, mentally summarizes; weighs the evidence; listens between the lines to tone of voice.

Reprinted from Dr. Lyman K. Steil, *Effective Listening, Key to Your Success*, 1983, by permission of McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Ten Keys to Effective Listening

1. **Listen for ideas, not facts.** Start relating the facts to ideas as soon as you receive them.

2. **Judge content, not delivery.** Listen carefully to what people say, not their delivery. A person speaking with the air of authority could be dead wrong.

3. **Listen optimistically.** Make the conscious effort to be interested. The new material may be enjoyable.

4. **Don't jump to conclusions.** By assuming we know what is coming next we can seriously damage our understanding of what is being said. Clear your head of your own ideas and listen to the speaker's.

5. **Adjust your note-taking to the speaker.** Try to figure out as soon as you can how the speaker is organizing his/her ideas, and suit your note-taking to his/her style.

6. **Concentrate.** Focus on the speaker. Give him/her your attention and thought. Become aware of what interferes with your concentration and fight it.

7. **We can think four times faster than a speaker can talk.** Use this "space gap" to summarize and interpret, evaluate and respond.

8. **Work at and practice listening.** Effective listening is hard work. Responding and giving feedback shows interest. Intensive listening will even increase the heart rate and sometimes cause perspiration.

9. **Keep an open mind and hold your emotions in check.** Be aware that each person has their own set of emotion-laden words or situations that trigger thought, feelings and memories; deal with these and go on.

10. **Exercise your mind.** Only by handling difficult material do we gain confidence in our mental capacities and stretch those capacities.

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

Ten Keys to Effective Listening

1. Listen for ideas, not facts.
2. Judge content, not delivery.
3. Listen optimistically.
4. Don't jump to conclusions.
5. Adjust your note-taking to the speaker.
6. Concentrate.
7. We can think four times faster than a speaker can talk—use the "space gap."
8. Work at and practice listening.
9. Keep an open mind and hold your emotions in check.
10. Exercise your mind.

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

How Do You Rate as a Listener?

Complete the following self-rating scale to evaluate your strengths and to identify where you might need to fine-tune your listening skills. Circle the number that best describes your listening skills: 1 = poor, 5 = excellent. In answering, ask yourself "Do I . . . "

	Poor Excellent	
1. Have a desk or table as a physical barrier between parties	1 2 3 4 5	Use furniture to draw persons together; sit face to face without desk in between
2. Have seats too close or too distant	1 2 3 4 5	Arrange seats arms length apart
3. Slouch, lean away, or otherwise employ poor posture	1 2 3 4 5	Sit in a relaxed, yet attentive way
4. Maintain little eye contact	1 2 3 4 5	Maintain appropriate eye contact
5. Employe gestures that are distracting, that compete for attention with my words	1 2 3 4 5	Employ gestures that are unobtrusive, that are natural and spontaneous and highlight my words
6. Talk mostly about myself	1 2 3 4 5	Keep focus on other person
7. Violate other person's trust by sharing private matters with others	1 2 3 4 5	Keep confidential matters private
8. Rarely use other person's name	1 2 3 4 5	Often use other's name in the conversation; personalize conversation
9. Listen only intermittently	1 2 3 4 5	Listen carefully to all that is said

Reprinted from Andrew V. Beale, "Assessing and Improving Your Listening Skills," National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Bulletin, March, 1990, Vol. 74, No. 524, by permission of NASSP.

		Poor				Excellent	
10.	Tend to ask lots of "factual" questions	1	2	3	4	5	Ask questions sparingly and only to clarify other's meaning
11.	Assume to know what other person means	1	2	3	4	5	Elicit feedback to ensure accuracy of perceptions
12.	Ask "yes" or "no" questions	1	2	3	4	5	Ask open-ended questions
13.	Rush to fill the void when silences occur	1	2	3	4	5	Use silence in a positive way to allow others to think, collect their thoughts
14.	Give advice freely when asked	1	2	3	4	5	Reflect on other's need for direction when asked for advice
15.	Mainly respond to the facts of what is said	1	2	3	4	5	Remain sensitive to the feelings behind what is actually said
16.	Interrupt or finish other person's sentences	1	2	3	4	5	Wait for other person to finish, even if I have something to add
17.	Engage in talk that is mostly question and answer	1	2	3	4	5	Have talks that flow like a conversation
18.	Mostly use the words "I" or "me"	1	2	3	4	5	Mostly use the word "you"
19.	Do most of the talking	1	2	3	4	5	Do most of the listening
20.	Always thinking of what to say next	1	2	3	4	5	Listen without worrying about what I'll say next
21.	Ask multiple questions	1	2	3	4	5	Keep questions simple and to the point

	Poor				Excellent	
22. Interrupt; can't wait to interject own	1	2	3	4	5	Avoid interruptions; allow others to complete sentences and thoughts
23. Listen for facts	1	2	3	4	5	Listen for central meaning
24. Buy-in; make other's problem my problem	1	2	3	4	5	Allow other person to "own" the problem

Scoring

Add the circled numbers to determine your score.

105 - 120 = You are an exceptional listener. You are likely to be called upon by your staff members in need. You convey considerable caring, acceptance, and understanding.

90 - 104 = You're OK, but try harder to put yourself in the other person's shoes. Keep the focus on the other person and let them know you really care by being quiet and letting them talk.

75 - 89 = You've got potential . . . hang in there. Work on focusing on the other person rather than on yourself. People have a tremendous capacity for solving their own problems if someone will only help them "think out loud."

Below 75 = Your listening skills are rusty! Perhaps you're more concerned with solving problems than you are with understanding your staff's needs and feelings. Take the time to listen—it will be time well-spent.

Active Listening Skills

1. Show understanding and acceptance by nonverbal behavior:
    - tone of voice
    - facial expression
    - gestures
    - eye contact
    - posture
2. Put yourself in the other person's place to understand what the person is saying and how s/he feels.
3. Restate the person's most important thoughts and feelings.

   Example: "So your parents are sending you to camp for the entire summer, and you feel angry at them for doing so. Is that right?"
4. Do not interrupt, offer advice, or give suggestions. Do not bring up similar feelings and problems from your own experiences.

Practice good listening by:

- Asking relevant questions to clarify facts
- Being supportive
  Example: "You seem upset about that situation. I can understand how you feel."
- Summarizing by highlighting the main points, feelings and ideas.

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Activity: Robbery Report Sheet

Directions: Explain to the participants that you will be reading a message which will be passed on from person to person. Ask the participants to notice any changes in the message as it is passed.

Ask for three volunteers to participate in the activity. Ask two of the volunteers to leave the room or go out of hearing distance. Then, distribute the activity sheet entitled "Robbery Report Sheet" to participants and instruct them to note down any differences, omissions, or additions in each repetition of the message. Ask the first volunteer to listen closely as you read the message so that they can repeat it to the next volunteer. Then read the message written at the top of the activity sheet. At this point, bring in one of the two remaining volunteers and have the first volunteer repeat the message as they remember it to the second volunteer. Then repeat the process, having the second volunteer repeat the message to the third. Finally, ask the third volunteer to repeat the message to the participants in general.

Lead the participants in a discussion of the differences they noted in each of the repetitions and use this as a springboard into a discussion of effective listening techniques.

By Tamara Norden, Vocational Studies Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991.

Robbery Report Worksheet

Message: Please listen carefully because I have to go to the hospital right away. I just called the police from the gas station on the corner. Wait here and report the robbery to them. I was walking into Johnson's Liquor Store, and this guy came running out and almost knocked me over. He was carrying a white bag, and it looked like he had a gun in his left hand. He was wearing a Levi jacket with the sleeves cut out and a green and blue plaid shirt and blue jeans with a hole in the right knee. He had skinny legs and a big stomach. He wore wire rim glasses and high top red Converse tennies. He was bald and had a brown mustache and was six and a half feet tall, probably in his mid thirties.

Directions: For each repetition of the report, note anything the person missed, added, or changed from the previous report.

First repetition:

Second repetition:

Third repetition:

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Competency 8.0

Demonstrate skills to maintain effective behavior

8.01 Demonstrate skills to effectively express ideas and emotions, especially during conflict.
8.02 Identify barriers to effective communication.
8.03 Demonstrate effective techniques to get what one believes in.

Competency 8.0
Overview

The previous two competencies addressed basic communication skills—speaking and listening. These skills are put to the test when conflict arises. Everyone goes through episodes of conflict. The successful person prepares ahead for conflict, and has strategies in mind for when a difficult situation presents itself.

Conflict resolution skills are valuable in all settings—in the home, on the job, with neighbors, and at school. This competency is designed to help participants develop effective conflict resolution skills. Participants completing Competency 8.0: Skills to Maintain Effective Behavior will be able to:

8.01 Demonstrate skills to effectively express ideas and emotions, especially during conflict
8.02 Identify barriers to effective communication
8.03 Demonstrate effective techniques to get what one believes in

Indicator 8.01 provides an overview of various conflict resolution techniques. Typical sources of conflict are discussed, and practical tips are provided for handling conflict constructively. Role plays and discussion are recommended for Indicator 8.01 and Indicator 8.02, in which participants should identify personal barriers to maintaining effective communication. In Indicator 8.03, participants discuss and explore means by which they can assert their needs, wishes, and desires.

Competency 8.0: Skills to Maintain Effective Behavior

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
8.01	Demonstrate skills to effectively express ideas and emotions, especially during conflict	Discussion; role play	*Sources of Conflict (note accompanying overhead)* *How To Resolve Conflicts (note accompanying overhead)* *Practical Tips to Remember When Resolving Conflicts* *Techniques for Assertive Communication During Conflict*
8.02	Identify barriers to effective communication	Discussion; role play	
8.03	Demonstrate effective techniques to get what one believes in	Discussion; role play	

Resources

Auvine, Brian, et al. (1977). A manual for group facilitators. Madison, WI: Center for Conflict Resolution.

Avery, Michel, et al. (1981). Building united judgment: A handbook for consensus decision making. Madison, WI: Center for Conflict Resolution.

Bartoo, Glenn. (1978). Decisions by consensus: A study of the Quaker method. Chicago, IL: Progressive Publishing.

Beer, Jennifer, ed.. (1986). Peacemaking in your neighborhood: Reflections of an experiment in community mediation. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publications.

Bolton, Robert. (1978). People skills: How to assert yourself, listen to others and resolve conflicts. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Blake, Robert and Mouton, Jane. (1984). The managerial grid III. Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing.

Delbecq, Andre, Van de Van, Andrew, and Gustafson, David. (1986). Group techniques for program planning: A guide to nominal group and delphi processes. Middleton, WI: Green Briar Publishing.

Fisher, Roger and Ury, William. (1983). Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in. New York: Penguin Books.

Karp, H.B. (1980). Team building from a gestalt perspective, Handbook for Group Facilitators, 1980, J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, eds. San Diego, CA: University Associates.

Lerner, Harriet G. (1985). Dance of anger: A woman's guide to changing the patterns of intimate relationships. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Moore, Christopher. (1986). The mediation process: Practical strategies for resolving conflict. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Timm, Paul R. (1987). Successful self-management. London: Crisp Publications, Inc.

Sources of Conflict

1. **Competition for Limited Resources**
   - money
   - responsibility
   - personnel
   - space
   - tools/equipment
   - access to superiors

2. **Clashes of Values**
   - adherence to procedures
   - inconsistently enforced rules
   - interdependency
   - preferences, personal style

3. **Poorly Defined Responsibilities**
   - overlapping responsibilities with unclear boundaries
   - unclear performance expectations

4. **Change**
   - societal
   - change in client system
   - downsizing/windfall

5. **Human Drives for Success, Recognition, Power**
   - competition at someone else's expense

Reprinted from *The Mediation Training Handbook* by permission of the Waukesha County Mediation Program, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Sources of Conflict

1. Competition for Limited Resources
2. Clashes of Values
3. Poorly Defined Responsibilities
4. Change
5. Human Drives for Success, Recognition, Power

Reprinted from *The Mediation Training Handbook* by permission of the Waukesha County Mediation Program, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

How To Resolve Conflicts

Here are some suggestions which can help you communicate better when you are solving problems:

1. **Talk directly**: Direct conversation is much more effective than sending a letter, banging on a wall or complaining to everyone else.
2. **Choose a good time**: Plan to talk to the other person at the right time and allow yourselves enough time for a thorough discussion.
3. **Plan ahead**: Think out what you want to say ahead of time. State clearly what the problem is and how it affects you.
4. **Don't blame or namecall**: Antagonizing the other person only makes it harder for him or her to hear you.
5. **Give information**: Instead of interpreting the other person's behavior, give information about your own feelings: "When your car blocks my driveway, I get angry because I can't get to work on time."
6. **Listen**: Give the other person a chance to tell his or her side of the conflict.
7. **Show that you are listening**: Although you may not agree with someone's opinion or viewpoint, tell the other person that you hear him/her and are glad the issue is being discussed.
8. **Talk it all through**: Once you start, get all of the issues and feelings out into the open. Don't leave out the part that is "too difficult."
9. **Work on a solution**: When you have reached this point in the discussion, start working on a solution, cooperating together. Be specific!
10. **Follow through**: Agree to check with each other at specific times to make sure that the agreement is still working . . . . then really do it!

Reprinted by permission of The Community Board Program, San Francisco, California.

How to Resolve Conflicts

1. Talk directly
2. Choose a good time
3. Plan ahead
4. Don't blame or namecall
5. Give information
6. Listen
7. Show that you are listening
8. Talk it all through
9. Work on a solution
10. Follow through

Reprinted by permission of The Community Board Program, San Francisco, California.

NO 306

Practical Tips To Remember When Resolving Conflicts

1. Conflicts usually occur when people have different **perceptions** of a problem situation.

2. Know your own **role** . . . know when to assist someone and when to say no!

3. If it is not your job to resolve the conflict then **refer** it.

4. Know your own **biases** and how you react to others.

5. If you are mediating, remain **neutral** and **objective**.

6. Allow people to "**ventilate**" or express their feelings.

7. **Listen** to people and require them to listen to each other.

8. DO NOT ASSUME ANYTHING.

9. Be **creative** and offer many options for solutions.

10. Understand your own **conflict style**; it may be different from the other person's style.

11. **Communicate**. Talk to the people who are involved in the conflict and be honest and direct with them.

12. **Remember** that if it's someone else's conflict the solution should also belong to them.

These tips will not always ensure that you will be able to resolve a conflict. They will, however, assist you by providing a setting and the opportunity to reach a satisfactory agreement.

Reprinted by permission of Mary Jo Coffee, Waukesha County Technical College, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Techniques for Assertive Communication During Conflict

1. **Broken Record**

A skill that by calm repetition—saying what you want over and over again—teaches persistence without your having to rehearse arguments or angry feelings beforehand, in order to be "up" while dealing with others. Allows you to feel comfortable in ignoring manipulative verbal side traps, argumentative baiting, irrelevant logic, while sticking to your point.

2. **Fogging**

A skill that teaches acceptance of manipulative criticism by calmly acknowledging to your critic the possibility that there may be some truth in what he/she says, yet allows you to remain your own judge of what you do.

Allows you to receive criticism comfortably without becoming anxious or defensive while giving no regard to those using manipulative criticism.

Examples:

A. Agree with truth:

"You're wearing that shirt today."

"That's right; I am wearing that shirt."
(rather than, "What's wrong with this shirt?"

B. Agree with possibility—however slight:

"You're not very organized."

"Maybe I'm not very organized."
(rather than, "Waddaya mean, not organized—you should talk!")

C. Agree with logic:

"If we bought a car now, instead of keeping the old clunker, we'd be a lot safer out on the road and we wouldn't have these high repair bills."

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

"You're right. A new car would have those advantages."
(rather than, "There you go, another way to spend my money. Why do you keep . . . " etc.)

D. Allow for improvement—nobody's perfect:

"Your dresses don't fit you."

"I'm sure they could fit better."

E. Empathy:

"You're being very unfair."

"I can see how you feel that I'm unfair."

3. **Negative Assertion**

A skill that teaches acceptance of your errors and faults (without having to apologize) by strongly and sympathetically agreeing with hostile or constructive criticism of your negative qualities.

Allows you to look more comfortably at negatives in your own behavior or personality without feeling defensive and anxious, or resorting to denial of real errors, while at the same time reducing your critic's anger or hostility.

Note the nonverbal components of Negative Assertion. The tone of voice is neither apologetic nor hostile. You are *asserting* your error, not simply admitting it. Negative assertion is similar to fogging, but differs in that:

A. You actually made the error or possess the fault (rather than a *possibility* that it happened).

B. You agree with your critic's value system that your act was a negative thing (dumb, forgetful, poor judgment, etc.).

4. **Negative Inquiry**

A skill that teaches the active prompting of criticism in order to use the information (if helpful) or exhaust it (if manipulative) while prompting your critic to be more assertive and less dependent on manipulative ploys.

Allows you more comfortably to seek out criticism about yourself in close relationships while prompting the other person to express honest negative feelings and improve communication.

Notes:

A. Turn the spotlight on yourself, not on your critic. "What is it about me that's wrong?" If you focus on your critic, you will most likely get a defensive reaction that will not facilitate communication.

B. Actively invite the criticism, both verbally and nonverbally. You will elicit feelings from your critic more effectively if you convey the message, "I'm very eager to hear this valuable information. I want to know more."

C. Specify the criticism. Listen closely to the words and help the critic focus on exactly what is wrong.

"You say I'm dressed sloppy? What is it about the way I'm dressed that's sloppy?
"Well, your shoes, for one thing."
"What is it about my shoes that's sloppy?"
"Well, just look at them. You haven't shined them in a month."
"Then it's my *shoes not being shined* that makes me look sloppy?"
"Yes—that's one thing."

D. Exhaust the criticism.

"Is there anything else about my shoes that is wrong?" Or,
"Is there anything else besides my shoes that makes me look sloppy?" Or,
"There must be more things about me that are wrong than just my clothing." Or,
"Are you *sure* there's nothing else that's wrong with me?"

E. Analyze the criticism.

"What is it about ___________ that's wrong?"

F. Listen for the "I" statement. Remember that criticism comes from other people's value systems, that they are often unaware that their subjective value systems are operating, and that behind every piece of criticism is a statement, "I don't like it." Negative inquiry is especially helpful in breaking through feelings. Only then can you make agreements, compromises, or conclusions that have a solid basis.

G. Specify what the critic wants. You might make unwarranted assumptions if you don't do this.

"It sounds like you want me to clear things with you before I submit an 'Improvement needed' evaluation."

"Yes . . . Well, no. Go ahead and make the decision. Just be sure to let me know as soon as possible. It's when I don't know that you've done it that I have problems."

5. **Free Information**

Free Information is *any* information—besides a 'yes' or 'no' answer—that a person gives you about him/herself. It may or may not have anything to do with the question you asked. Listen to the words and comment on them.

If you ask questions that begin with What, When, Where, or How, the reply will usually furnish you with more Free Information than questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'; e.g., "What are some things you like most about your work?" will give you more Free Information than "Do you like your work?"

6. **Self-Disclosure**

A skill that teaches the acceptance and initiation of discussion of both the positive and negative aspects of your personality, behavior, lifestyle, and intelligence to enhance the social communication and reduce manipulation. It allows you comfortably to disclose aspects of yourself and your life that previously caused feelings of ignorance, anxiety, or guilt.

Self-disclosures are "I" statements. They describe the feelings going on inside us at the moment. We take full responsibility for these feelings and do not blame others for them. Thus, "You are making me very angry" is *not* a self-disclosure, but "I am getting angry at you" is.

Sample Self-disclosures:

I enjoy being with you.
I'm confused.
I don't know.
I really like what you said.
I'm annoyed.
I'm not comfortable.

Our relationship is very important to me.
I would like to understand it better.
I don't know the answer to that.
I'm feeling pressed right now.
I'd like to think a minute before answering you.

Unit 3
Balancing Family, School, and Self

Note to Instructors: Plan on spending nine classroom hours on "Unit 3: Balancing Family, School, and Self." The nine hours can be divided in any way that best meets the needs of your group. If you choose to divide the time evenly among the five Competencies, then spend roughly 1 hour and 45 minutes on each Competency.

Unit 3 includes:

9.0 Skills to Manage Stress
10.0 Skills to Manage Time
11.0 Skills for Making Ends Meet Financially
12.0 Skills to Develop a Personal Support System
13.0 Skills to Nurture Other Family Members and Friends

Competency 9.0

Skills to manage stress

9.01 Define stress/stressors.
9.02 Identify causes of stress.
9.03 Identify personal responses to stress.
9.04 Identify positive ways to manage stress.

Competency 9.0
Overview

Everyone has some amount of stress in their lives. Single parents, women who are newly alone (through divorce, separation, or loss of a spouse), and women who are re-entering the job market for the first time after many years all have considerable amounts of stress.

Some stress can be eliminated. For the most part, though, we simply need to learn how to handle stress. Preventative health care, relaxation, and being gentle with ourselves are ways to lessen the effects of stress.

This competency is designed to help participants develop skills to manage stress in their lives. Participants completing Competency 9.0: Skills to Manage Stress will be able to:

9.01 Define stress and stressors
9.02 Identify causes of stress
9.03 Identify personal responses to stress
9.04 Identify positive ways to manage stress

In Indicator 9.01, instructors should guide participants in a discussion to define stress and stressors (situations, events, problems or difficulties that cause feelings of stress in a person). In Indicator 9.02, participants will identify causes of stress in their lives. Two types of checklists provide ways to help participants think about their stress levels. In Indicator 9.03, general and personal responses to stress are discussed. A checklist provides an opportunity for participants to consider their own responses to stress. Indicator 9.04 helps participants choose constructive ways to deal with stress. Exercises are suggested, and examples are provided of effective self-talk for dealing with tension. Finally, participants are asked to write out their own plans for dealing with stress in the future.

Competency 9.0: Skills to Manage Stress

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
9.01	Define stress and stressors	Discussion	
9.02	Identify causes of stress	Activity	*How Vulnerable Are You To Stress?*
9.03	Identify personal responses to stress	Discussion	*Stress: An Increasing Danger Worth Your Attention*
		Lecture; discussion	*Three Responses to Stress*
		Activity	*Identifying Your Stress Signals and Reactions*
		Lecture; discussion	*Stress Skills: Identifying Coping Patterns*
		Activity	*Identifying Coping Patterns*
9.04	Identify positive ways to manage stress	Discussion	*Exercises To Help You Cope With Stress*
		Discussion	*Ways To Deal With Tension (note accompanying overhead)*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
9.04 (continued)	Discussion; role play	*Talking Calmly Word-by-Word to Cope With Anxiety*
	Discussion; role play	*Talking Calmly Word-by-Word to Cope With Anger*
	Activity	*Getting a Handle on Stress and Distress*

Resources

Anderson, Robert. (1978). Stress power! How to turn tension into energy. New York: Plenum Publishing Co.

Ardell, Donald B. (1986). High level wellness: An alternative to doctors, drugs, and disease. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Benson, Herbert, and Klipper, Miriam Z. (1976). The relaxation response. New York: Avon Books.

Charlesworth, Edward A., and Nathan, Ronald S. (1985). Stress management: A comprehensive guide to wellness. New York: Ballantine Books.

Davis, Martha, Eshelman, Elizabeth Robbins, and McKay, Matthew. (1988). The relaxation and stress reduction workbook. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.

Girdano, Daniel, and Everly, George. (1989). Controlling stress and tension: A holistic approach. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Goldberg, Phillip. (1979). Executive health. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.

Jacobson, Edmund. (1978). You must relax. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.

Lakein, Alan. (1989). How to get control of your time and your life. New York: New American Library.

Lazarus, Arnold A. (1985). In the mind's eye: The power of imagery for personal enrichment. New York: Guilford Publications.

Pelletier, Kenneth. (1984). Mind as healer, mind as slayer: A holistic approach to preventing stress disorders. Magnolia, MA: Peter Smith Publishing, Inc.

Selye, Hans. (1978). The stress of life. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.

Shealy, C. Norman. (1988). Ninety days to self-health. Canal Winchester, OH: Ariel Press.

Stress. Appleton, WI: Fox Valley Technical College Health Service. (Note: A six-page illustrated pamphlet. For more information, call 414/735-5745.)

Stress and Work: A report of the Minnesota governor's White House conference. (1982). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Tubesing, Nancy L. and Tubesing, Donald A. (1983). Structured exercises in stress management. Duluth, MN: Whole Person Press.

How Vulnerable Are You To Stress?

In a modern society, most of us can't avoid stress. But we can learn to behave in ways that lessen its effects. Researchers have identified a number of factors that affect one's vulnerability to stress—among them eating and sleeping habits, caffeine and alcohol intake, and manner of expressing emotions. The following questionnaire, developed by psychologists Lyle H. Miller and Alma Dell Smith of Boston Medical Center, is designed to help you discover your vulnerability quotient and to pinpoint trouble spots. Rate each item from 1 (almost always) to 5 (never), according to how much of the time the statement is true of you. Be sure to mark each item, even it if seems not to apply to you—for example, if you don't smoke, check off "1" next to item 6.

Almost Always				Never	
1	2	3	4	5	1. I eat at least one hot, balanced meal a day.
1	2	3	4	5	2. I get seven to eight hours of sleep at least four nights a week.
1	2	3	4	5	3. I give and receive affection regularly.
1	2	3	4	5	4. I have at least one relative within 50 miles on whom I can rely.
1	2	3	4	5	5. I exercise to the point of perspiration at least twice a week.
1	2	3	4	5	6. I limit myself to less than half a pack of cigarettes a day.
1	2	3	4	5	7. I take fewer than five alcoholic drinks a week.
1	2	3	4	5	8. I am the appropriate weight for my height.
1	2	3	4	5	9. I have an income adequate to meet basic expenses.
1	2	3	4	5	10. I get strength from my religious beliefs.
1	2	3	4	5	11. I regularly attend club or social activities.
1	2	3	4	5	12. I have a network of friends and acquaintances.

Reprinted from *Family and Career Transitions Resource Guide*, 1989, by permission of the Division of Vocational and Career Education, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

Almost Always   Never

1 2 3 4 5 13. I have one or more friends to confide in about personal matters.

1 2 3 4 5 14. I am in good health (including eyesight, hearing, teeth).

1 2 3 4 5 15. I am unable to speak openly about my feelings when angry or worried.

1 2 3 4 5 16. I have regular conversations with the people I live with about domestic problems—for example, chores and money.

1 2 3 4 5 17. I do something for fun at least once a week.

1 2 3 4 5 18. I am able to organize my time effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 19. I drink fewer than three cups of coffee (or other caffeine-rich drinks) a day.

1 2 3 4 5 20. I take some quiet time for myself during the day.

To get your score, add up the figures and subtract 20. A score below 10 indicates excellent resistance to stress. A score over 30 indicates some vulnerability to stress. You are seriously vulnerable if your score is over 50.

You can make yourself less vulnerable by reviewing the items on which you scored 3 or higher and trying to modify them. Notice that nearly all of the items describe situations and behaviors over which you have a great deal of control. Concentrate first on those that are easiest to change—for example, eating a hot, balanced meal daily and having fun at least once a week—before tackling those that seem more difficult.

Stress: An Increasing Danger Worth Your Attention

While some people are practicing higher standards of good nutrition than they did in the past and giving sensible exercise its due, the intangible but very real danger of day-to-day stress may be an unhealthy factor that these same individuals have not even begun to consider.

Keep in mind that a certain amount of stress or pressure is inevitable, providing an element of challenge in life that gives us the personal satisfaction of "rising to the occasion"—be it on a large or small scale. Still, when the pressure is prolonged, the mind and body tire, and both physical and mental illness can result. Here are some questions to consider in determining the effect of stress on your life:

- **Am I ignoring signs of tension?** Feeling vaguely irritable although things are going well at the moment, giving curt answers when we used to choose our words more carefully, or overreacting to a slight disturbance may all indicate ongoing pressure.

- **Am I overly concerned about doing things perfectly?** While perfection is an ideal we aim for, after the fact, we ought to accept failures and marginal results and learn from them for the future.

- **Do I have and use emotional safety valves?** This may seem obvious, but many of us feel that it is a weakness to even acknowledge such a need, or that we will take a break (which can be anything from jogging for half an hour to having a much-needed "heavy" conversation with a friend) when we have time. These are serious errors in judgment, since others have also found that they are able to face an ongoing problem or complete a difficult task with renewed interest and energy after taking such measures.

- **Am I overly aggressive or overly timid in my dealings and conversations with others?** In this intangible area of life as well as in more tangible ones, extremes can be destructive. Establishing a balance in our interactions with others is an important element in the overall harmony of our lives.

- **Is my general attitude negative and pessimistic?** Some people actually feel uncomfortable if they find themselves in a state of calmness. They seem to take seriously the tongue-in-cheek saying: "Life is hard, and then you die!"

As an aid to reducing stress at home and on the job, have you mastered the art of—

- Learning to delegate? (A junior-high student *can* be taught to run a washer and dryer.)
- Doing things on impulse occasionally? (Do you *always* go

Reprinted with permission from *Personal Report for the Professional Secretary*, October 1989, © by National Institute of Business Management, 1328 Broadway, New York, NY 10001, 1-800-543-2052.

"straight home" from work, even if a new bookstore looks inviting?)

- Taking some time to help others? (This provides a psychological boost and puts our own problems in perspective.)

- Observation: Taking care of ourselves physically will, of course, help to diminish the effects of stress. We should also learn to establish priorities for each day, organize our materials for what needs to be done in some systematic way to save time and energy later on, and be willing to acknowledge our limitations. In addition, those old standbys, seeking a change of scenery or developing a hobby, are as helpful as they ever were in reducing tension.

Three Responses to Stress

In general, people respond to stressful situations in three different ways.

A. Acting Out

Acting out means taking your feelings out on the people around you. Men who beat their wives or lovers are "acting out." Parents who beat their kids or call them degrading names are acting out. Teenagers who vandalize buildings and harrass people on the street are "acting out." People who cope with stress by acting out do not always act out against the person or situation perceived to be the source of the stress. For example, a husband may get in a hassle with his foreman at work and ends up feeling very threatened and angry. He's so frustrated by the time he gets home that he takes it out on his wife, even though her biggest crime was to say hello to her husband when he walked in the door. Can you give other examples of acting out?

B. Withdrawal

Withdrawal means escaping from the stressful situation. This can be done with pills, alcohol, or other drugs. It can be done by running away. It can be done by withdrawing into our own little shells and trying to make the rest of the world go away. Do you have examples of withdrawal in the face of stress? (Taking a breather or a "time-out" is not the same as withdrawal.)

C. Taking Charge

Taking charge means dealing with the situation. It means asking the question, "What can I do about this situation?" and then doing it. It means viewing the situation as a challenge and meeting it up front.

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

Again these are three general reactions to stress. All of us have used each one at different times. Some lash out at someone because of our own hurt and pain. Some try to escape from a stressful situation by getting drunk or running away. And, of course, there have been countless times when we have taken charge and used our stress-related energy to do what had to be done and succeeded beautifully. Think of a time when you took charge and handled a stressful situation like a pro.

Ask each person to briefly describe such an experience.

Take another look at the three stressful situations that you listed. Consider each one and decide how you have been responding to it. Have you been acting out, withdrawing, or taking charge? Or, have you been doing a little of each? See if you can find a pattern in the way in which you respond to stressful situations. Spend a short time discussing each person's list, helping each to determine his/her customary stress response, if he/she has one.

Identifying Your Stress Signals and Reactions

How do you react to a stressful situation? (Mark all that apply.)

______ I worry.
______ I lose sleep.
______ I become nervous.
______ I feel my muscles tighten.
______ I get a headache.
______ My stomach hurts.
______ My heart pounds.
______ My face becomes red.
______ I feel faint.
______ I feel cold.
______ I feel hot.
______ I feel like crying.
______ My hands shake.
______ I can't sit still.
______ I stutter or have difficulty talking.
______ I cough or clear my throat.
______ My face breaks out.

What other reactions do you have?

How do you currently cope with your stress reactions?

______ I get angry.
______ I become depressed.
______ I take medication (aspirin, tranquilizers, etc.)
______ I drink or use illegally acquired drugs.
______ I blame my problems on others.
______ I tell myself that I'll laugh about this later.
______ I ignore them.
______ I talk about the stress with a friend, family member, or counselor.
______ I look for ways to change the stress-causing situation.
______ I hate myself.
______ I laugh at the situation.
______ I accept the situation.
______ I think about suicide.
______ I withdraw from others.
______ I eat.
______ I try to make others feel miserable, too.
______ I try to think of a way to avoid this kind of stressful situation in the future.

What other ways do you have of coping with your stress reactions?

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

Stress Skills: Identifying Coping Patterns

"Skills for managing stress?" you may say. "I'm not sure I have any. I just do what comes naturally."

That's the point. "What comes naturally" is your typical coping style—your stress skills. You use coping skills all the time. A coping skill is nothing more than a way of adapting to stress. It doesn't necessarily solve the problem; it simply helps you handle it. It doesn't eliminate the stressor—it helps you manage the stress.

What do you do when someone asks you for "just one more favor?" Throw up your hands in dismay? Say "No!" Scream and shout? Pout? Bargain by saying "I'll do this for you if you'll do that for me." Say, "Sure." No matter which response you choose, you're using a stress skill. Screaming, bargaining, throwing up your arms or just throwing up—all are ways of coping, ways of managing stress.

What are some of your customary coping skills? List several ways you typically cope when you feel stressed. (Example: crying, eating, hot baths.)

____
____
____
____
____

Although these behaviors come "naturally" to you now, they were once as unfamiliar as skydiving to some or knitting to others. You had to learn them and practice them before you honed them into the skills you now take for granted.

Where did you first learn them? The process of skill-building really began with your first breath! You learned by observation. By trial and error. By trial and success. Whether they stem from childhood, adolescence, or yesterday's desperation,

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum*, 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

there's nothing wrong with relying on coping skills that *work*. The trouble is, sometimes they *stop working!* Skills get outdated. You get in a rut. Short term measures may be ineffective when stretched over the long haul. Or the price gets too high to pay!

Every coping mechanism has a price and a payoff. Drinking alcohol to unwind is a coping skill. It works. It also costs something: a headache the morning after, loss of productive time and creativity, the irritation and embarrassment your behavior causes others, possible liver damage. Keeping your mouth shut when you're angry, drinking coffee to stay awake, staying home from work when you have a cold—these and hundreds of other behaviors can be effective stress skills. But each has its price.

Some coping skills are better than others. Some are stop-gap measures. Crying, shouting, or taking a bath may get you through a few hours of stress, but they can't be relied upon forever. Others, such as regular exercise or talking with friends yield high profits at low cost.

Once a coping mechanism works for you, you're likely to use it over and over again. It seems easier than trying new ones, less risky. That's why most people end up in ruts. In fact, it can be dangerous to limit your coping repertoire to a few familiar skills that must suffice in almost all situations. For example, if cat-napping is one of your customary coping strategies, it may work well in church, but not if you're the minister. Dozing after work is great, but not if you're in the midst of a family conflict.

Coping skills can also stop working because they are outdated. Some skills which are perfect for one stage of life won't work at all in another. Acting childish may have gotten you what you wanted when you were very young. It may have worked to some extent for you in adolescence. But acting childish may be damaging to you and to your children when you've become a parent.

The longer you cling to worn-out coping methods, the greater your stress becomes, and the harder it is to change!

Whether you cry to cope, eat potato chips, take warm baths, or talk to a friend, if the strategy you're using is working well for you, then keep it up. There are no right or wrong ways of managing stress. If your old skills are starting to let you down, or if some of them are starting to cost too much, or if you just want to broaden your range of possibilities, you can learn more skills to manage your stress.

Exercises for Coping:

Take one step at a time. Changing your habitual ways of coping with stress is the first step. You can't learn new skills until you're willing to break old habits, and breaking old habits is difficult. Old habits are like a cozy bed—easy to get into and hard to get out of.

Whittle the task down to a size you can change. Don't overwhelm yourself by resolving to break all your old habits overnight. Focus instead on developing one new habit. If you agree to practice just one new behavior, you'll begin to change.

Concentrate on creativity. To revitalize yourself, seek vital solutions. If you've always done it one way, that's the best reason to try it another way. It could give you a whole new perspective on your problem and its management.

Practice. And, be patient with yourself. New skills don't develop overnight. They feel awkward at first. If you've ever learned to ski you can remember how strange you felt at first. Learning to ski takes courage and persistence. You have to hang in there until the movements become familiar and effortless.

Stress skills, like the skill of skiing, take the same kind of courage and persistence. The new coping skill may not make you feel like you're coping at all. It's normal. Whatever you try that's new for you will take a bit of practice before you feel that it fits you comfortably. It is also exciting and fun to try something new. It's stimulating to experiment, to test yourself, to experience a different kind of success. Before you become proficient at the skill, you'll probably get enough energy back to have made your attempt worthwhile.

Identifying Coping Patterns

Your responses to the situations described below will show you how your coping skills developed. Don't deliberate. Jot down the first thing that comes to mind.

Situation: When you really mess something up:
Today I would typically ____________________
As a child I would have ____________________
As young adult I would have ____________________

Situation: When someone tells you "no":
Today I would typically ____________________
As a child I would have ____________________
As young adult I would have ____________________

Situation: When you're feeling "empty":
Today I would typically ____________________
As a child I would have ____________________
As young adult I would have ____________________

Look over your answers. What are your two or three favorite coping patterns or techniques?

____________ ____________ ____________

In what ways are you still using your childhood coping style? ____________

____

Think about your typical coping strategies. Which of your coping skills give you good value for the cost?

____________ ____________
____________ ____________
____________ ____________

Which ones may be costing you too much?

____________ ____________
____________ ____________
____________ ____________

Reprinted from *Reentry Women Project Curriculum,* 1989, by permission of Moraine Park Technical College, Fond du Lac Campus, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

What coping ruts are you stuck in? Which skills do you tend to overuse?

Which of your coping skills are probably outdated?

What one skill have you tried in the past but given up because it felt so awkward?

What do you think would have happened it you'd stuck with it?

List two skills you've been successful in learning:

Exercises To Help You Cope With Stress

- Establish some *realistic* goals and work towards achieving them. (Include goals that lead to enjoyment and fulfillment such as that special vacation you hope to take someday.)
- Find a tension outlet that works for you, and use it when you need to. Consider crossword puzzles, card games, running, dancing, aerobics, or playing a musical instrument. But stay away from those outlets that work only at the moment, that only add up to bad news, like eating, drinking, and drugs.
- Be careful not to schedule all of your leisure hours.
- Get proper rest. Try to stick to a regular sleep pattern.
- Learn to relax. Take time for yourself and be by yourself doing something pleasurable.
- Eat a nutritionally balanced diet. Cut down on caffeine, sugar, and white flour.
- If you're popping aspirin, antacids, or tranquilizers, cut down on the number you take, stop taking them, or get some professional counseling.
- Get regular exercise—aerobic is best. (Check with your doctor for types and amount.)
- Get in some big-muscle action; saw wood, dig up the garden, chop down trees, scrub the floor.
- Cut down on the noise levels which surround you. Turn down (or off) the television, radio, stereo, etc.
- Avoid going home and sitting in front of the TV or lying on the couch night after night.
- Take a walk—up the hall, up the street, or in the country.
- Take deep breaths before entering a stressful situation (or when you find yourself in the midst of one unexpectedly).

Reprinted from *Successful Life Skills Curriculum: Single Parents and Homemakers*, 1989, by permission of the Michigan Department of Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Lansing, Michigan.

- Stop worrying. Remind yourself that worrying doesn't help a situation--only action helps.
- Each week for a month, list the things that you dislike about your life. At the end of the month, compare lists to find out what's really making you unhappy. Concentrate on changing/accepting those things.
- Think positively! Change those stressful things which you can, and accept those which you cannot.
- Keep a diary faithfully, focusing on the positive aspects of your life and on your positive plans for the near future.
- Look for things to praise in yourself and others.
- Let bygones be bygones. Learn to forget past injustices. Learn to understand and forgive others.
- Get a new hairstyle, shave your mustache, grow a beard, or experiment with some new makeup.
- Schedule time to be with people you care about.
- Don't get caught up in the complaints of others.
- Try to keep other people's problems separate from your own.
- Avoid competitive leisure activities unless you can *easily* accept loss.

Ways to Deal With Tension

Here are eleven suggestions from the National Association for Mental Health on how to deal with tension:

1. **Talk it out.** When something worries you, don't bottle it up. Confide your worry to some level-headed person you can trust—your partner, father or mother, a good friend, a member of the clergy, your family doctor, a teacher, school counselor or dean. Talking things out helps to relieve strain, helps to see worry in a clearer light, and often helps determine what to do about it.

2. **Escape for a while.** Sometimes, when things go wrong, it helps to escape from the painful problem for a while to lose yourself in a movie or a book or a game, or a brief trip for a change of scene. Making yourself stand there and suffer is a form of self-punishment, not a way to solve a problem. But be prepared to come back and deal with your difficulty when you are more composed.

3. **Work off your anger.** If you feel like lashing out at someone who has provoked you, try holding off that impulse for a while. Meanwhile, do something constructive with the pent-up energy. Pitch into some physical activity like gardening, cleaning out the garage, carpentry or some other do-it-yourself project. Or work it out in tennis or a long walk.

4. **Give in occasionally.** If you find yourself getting into frequent quarrels with people, and feeling obstinate and defiant, remember that that's the way frustrated children behave. Stand your ground on what you know is right, but do so calmly and make allowance for the fact you could turn out to be wrong. And even if you are dead right, it's easier on your system to give in once in a while. If you yield you'll usually find that others will, too.

5. **Do something for others.** If you feel yourself worrying about yourself all the time, try doing something for somebody else. You'll find this will take the steam out of your worries and even give you a feeling of accomplishment.

6. **Take one thing at a time.** For people under tension, an ordinary work load sometimes seems unbearable. When that happens, remember that it's a temporary condition and you can work your way out of it. The surest way to do this is to take a few of the most urgent tasks and pitch

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

into them, one at a time, setting aside all the rest for the time being. Once you dispose of these you'll see that the remainder are not such a horrible mess after all.

7. **Shun the Superwoman/Superman urge**. Some people expect too much from themselves, and get into a constant state of worry and anxiety because they think they are not achieving as much as they should. No one can be perfect in everything. Decide which things you do well, then put your major effort into these. They are apt to be the things you like to do and, hence, those that give you the most satisfaction.

8. **Go easy with criticism**. Some people expect too much from others, and then feel frustrated, let down, disappointed, even trapped when another person does not measure up. The other person may be a husband or a child whom we are trying to fit into a preconceived pattern, perhaps even trying to make over to suit ourselves. Remember, each person has his/her own virtues, shortcomings, values, right to develop as an individual. Instead of being critical about the other person's behavior, search out the good points and help the person to develop them.

9. **Give the other person a break**. When people are under emotional tension, they often feel that they have to get there first, to edge out the other person, no matter if the goal is as trivial as getting ahead on the highway. If enough of us feel that way, and many of us do, then everything becomes a race in which somebody is bound to get injured physically, as on the highway, or emotionally and mentally. It need not be this way. When you give the other person a break, you very often make things easier for yourself. If they no longer feel you are a threat to them, they stop being a threat to you.

10. **Make yourself available**. Many of us have the feeling that we are being left out, slighted, neglected, rejected. Often, we just imagine that other people feel this way about us, when in reality they are eager for us to make the first move. It may be we are depreciating ourselves. Instead of shrinking away and withdrawing, it is much healthier, as well as more practical to make yourself available, to make some of the overtures instead of waiting to be asked.

11. **Schedule your recreation**. Many people drive themselves so hard that they allow themselves too little time for recreation, an essential for good physical and mental health. They find it hard to make themselves take time out. For such people a set routine and schedule will help, a program of definite hours when they will engage in some recreation. And, in general, it is desirable for almost everyone to have a hobby—an activity that can involve a person, provide a certain amount or pleasure and help him/her forget about work.

Ways to Deal With Tension

1. Talk it out
2. Escape for a while
3. Work off your anger
4. Give in occasionally
5. Do something for others
6. Take one thing at a time
7. Shun the Superwoman/Superman urge
8. Go easy with criticism
9. Give the other person a break
10. Make yourself available
11. Schedule your recreation

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum For Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Talking Calmly Word-by-Word to Cope With Anxiety

1. Preparing for Anxiety in Stressful Situations

Effective Self-Talk
What is it I have to do?
I choose to do it.
If I do the thing I fear, the fear is sure to die.
I know ways to deal with this.
I am well organized and efficient.
I have succeeded in situations like this one before. I am confident.
Time for a few deep breaths and relaxation. I am comfortable, relaxed, and at ease.

Less Effective Self-Talk
There's so much to do.
I have to do it!
This is always frightening, but I'll do it.
I think I can handle it.
I can't forget what I need to say.
I won't worry anymore.
Usually the deep breathing lessens the anxiety.

2. Coping When Anxiety Starts to Build

Effective Self-Talk
My muscles are partially relaxed. Time to relax even more.
I *can* meet this challenge. Coping is my middle name.
One step at a time. I can handle the situation.
I'll just think about what I have to do.
I'm in control. Relax and take a deep breath.

Less Effective Self-Talk
My muscles are getting tense. I have to relax.
This is frightening, but I think I'll be all right.
I can't handle it unless I take one step at a time.
Don't get distracted. Just do what you have to.
Don't get nervous. You are in control.

Reprinted from Dr. Edward A. Charlesworth and Dr. Ronald G. Nathan, *Stress Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Wellness*, 1984, by permission of Atheneum Publishers, New York.

3. Coping When Anxiety Starts to Overwhelm

Effective Self-Talk
Right now I feel nervous. But that's not like me. I'm also calm and confident.
If I do the thing I fear, the fear is sure to die.
I'll just pause. I *can* handle it.
I'll label my relaxation level from 0 to 10, so I keep it in a good range.
It's okay for me to feel some fear. It motivates me to do my best.
I'll pay attention to the present.
I won't try to eliminate fear totally. I'll just keep it manageable.

Less Effective Self-Talk
Don't get nervous. You'll blow it.
I can't get afraid. I have to be cool.
Don't slow down. You've just got to beat this.
I'll label my fear from 0 to 10, so I can watch it rise.
I shouldn't be afraid.
I shouldn't let my anxiety show.
I've got to stop being afraid.

4. Coping When It's All Over and the Anxiety Has Passed

Effective Self-Talk
I didn't get everything I wanted. That's okay. I tried, and that's what really counts.
I have succeeded in some ways, and I'll have these successes to draw on next time.
I did the right things for myself. The other person may be a little angry or sad, but that's okay.
That wasn't as hard as I thought. Next time it will be even easier.
I'm doing better at this. I'm making progress.

Less Effective Self-Talk
I didn't get everything I wanted. I should have done better.
I wasn't a total success—maybe next time.
I shouldn't have hurt the other person's feelings.
I didn't think I would make it. I hope next time it is easier.
I'm not doing as well as I should.

Talking Calmly Word-by-Word to Cope With Anger

1. Preparing for Anger in Stressful Situations

Effective Self-Talk
What is it that I have to do?
This may upset me, but I know some ways to deal with it.
There may not be any need for an argument.
I'll try not to take it too seriously.
Time for a few deep breaths and relaxation. I feel more comfortable, relaxed, and at ease.
Easy does it. Remember, I need to keep my sense of humor.

Less Effective Self-Talk
I have to win this one.
This is going to make me angry.
I know there will be an argument.
This one's for real.
I'm really ready.
They will find out I'm serious.

2. Coping When Anger Starts to Build

Effective Self-Talk
My muscles are starting to feel a little tight. Time to relax. Time to slow down.
My anger can remind me of what I need to do. Time to help myself.
Let's take this point by point.
Maybe we are both right. Let's try a cooperative approach.
Let's remember, it's not who is right but what is right.
Arguments lead to more arguments. Let's work constructively.
They may want me to get really angry. Well, I'm going to try to disappoint them.

Less Effective Self-Talk
I'm really getting uptight.
This makes me mad.
They are wrong.
They are against me.
Only one of us is right, and it's me.
Now they are in for an argument.
I'll show them.

Reprinted from Dr. Edward A. Charlesworth and Dr. Ronald G. Nathan, *Stress Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Wellness*, 1984, by permission of Atheneum Publishers, New York.

3. Coping When Anger Starts to Overwhelm

Effective Self-Talk
The more I keep my cool, the more I'm in control.
I'll think of what I want to get out of this.
I don't need to prove myself.
I don't want to make more out of this than I have to.
No need to doubt myself. What they say may not matter.
Look for the good parts of this. I don't want to assume the worst and jump to conclusions.

Less Effective Self-Talk
They can't do that.
I'll get even.
I can't let them get away with that.
I'll take it to the top.
They can't say that to me.
This is going to be awful.

4. Coping When It's All Over and the Anger Has Passed

Effective Self-Talk
These are difficult situations. They take time to straighten out.
I will try not to take it personally.
That wasn't really as hard as I thought.
I'm doing better at this! I'm making progress!
I can be pleased with my progress.

Less Effective Self-Talk
That always happens.
They still didn't see my point.
That was awful.
I should have said more.
I'll win the argument next time.

Getting a Handle on Stress and Distress

Personalize this sheet. Check yourself in each area: what are you currently doing and how might you implement the suggestions?

1. Work off stress.
2. Talk out your worries.
3. Learn to accept what you cannot change.
4. Avoid self-medication.
5. Get enough sleep.
6. Balance work and recreation.
7. Do something for others.
8. Take one thing at a time.
9. Give in once in a while.
10. Make yourself available.

Reprinted from *Getting a Handle on Stress and Distress*, National Institute on Mental Health.

Competency 10.0

Skills to manage time

10.01 Identify the importance of practicing time management.
10.02 Identify personal barriers to time management.
10.03 Identify time wasting/procrastinating behavior.
10.04 Develop organizational skills.
10.05 Identify positive time management techniques to balance family, school, and self.
10.06 Identify community resources.

Competency 10.0
Overview

For the new or returning student, effective time management skills are a must—particularly when the student has family responsibilities or works outside the home (or both). To keep up with school work while taking care of a family or holding down a job is quite a juggling trick, and time management skills are necessary to keep everything functioning smoothly.

In this competency, participants are encouraged to critically examine their own time management techniques and to develop positive methods to balance the different areas of their lives. Participants completing Competency 10.0: Skills to Manage Time will be able to:

10.01 Identify the importance of practicing time management
10.02 Identify personal barriers to time management
10.03 Identify time wasting/procrastinating behavior
10.04 Develop organizational skills
10.05 Identify positive time management techniques to balance family, school, and self
10.06 Identify community resources

Indicator 10.01 offers some general information on time management as a springboard for discussion on the importance of effective time management techniques. In Indicators 10.02 and 10.03, the participants are asked to evaluate their current time management methods through exercises which identify time wasting behaviors and barriers to time management. Following this, participants are provided with models for effective organizational and management skills in Indicators 10.04 and 10.05. Finally, Indicator 10.06 gives the instructor the opportunity to discuss local community resources that may aid participants in their management of time.

Competency 10.0: Skills to Manage Time

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
10.01 Identify the importance of practicing time management	Lecture	*Effective Time Management*
	Discussion	*Tips for Using Time Effectively (note accompanyng overhead)*
	Activity	*Time Management Scale*
10.02 Identify personal barriers to time management	Discussion	*Time Robbers (note accompanyng overhead)*
10.03 Identify time wasting/ procrastinating behavior	Activity	*Where Does the Time Go?*
	Activity; discussion	*Lowering Standards*
10.04 Develop organizational skills	Lecture	*Becoming More Efficient in Your Use of Time: Organizing Your Day*
	Activity	*Time Management Checklist*
	Lecture; discussion	*The Importance of Goals*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
10.05 Identify positive time management techniques to balance family, school and self	Activity; discussion	*Time On Your Hands*
	Discussion	*How Can I Save Time?*
	Activity	*Weekly Work Plan/ Monthly Work Plan*
	Discussion	*Climb the Stairway! (note accompanyng overhead)*
10.06 Identify community resources	Discussion	*Instructors may choose to invite guest speakers from the community*

Resources

Bliss, Edwin C. (1976). Getting things done, the ABC's of time management. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Brace, Pam and Jones, Peggy. (1983). Sidetracked home executives . . . from pigpen to paradise!. NewYork: Warner Books.

Conrad, Pam. (1986). Balancing home and career: Skills for successful life management. London: Crisp Publications, Inc.

Covey, Stephen R. (1989). The seven habits of highly effective people. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Haynes, Marion E. (1987). Personal time management. Los Altos, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc.

Lakein, Alan. (1989). How to get control of your time and your life. New York: New American Library.

Silcox, Diana. (1980). Woman time, personal time management for women only! New York: Peter H. Wyden, Inc.

Waldo, Kay C. and Mackenzie, R. Alec. (1981). About time! A woman's guide to time management. New York: McGraw-Hill.

What you should know about managing your time. (1985). South Deerfield, MA: Channing L. Bete Co, Inc. (Note: A 15-page illustrated booklet. For more information, call 413/665-7611.)

Winston, Stephanie. (1978). Getting organized part I: Time and paperwork. New York: Warner Books.

Winston, Stephanie. (1978). Getting organized, the easy way to put your life in order. New York: W. W. Norton and Co.

Effective Time Management

Effective time management is learning ways to accomplish the things you need to do or want to do in the most efficient manner with the least amount of time. Good time management does not mean being busy all the time. Persons who do not take time for pleasure and relaxation generally have to make time later for illness. Time management is actually how we control ourselves in the confines of a twenty-four hour day.

Time Robbers

1. **Interruptions**. Don't plan your schedule so strictly that you don't anticipate interruptions. If you don't have time for a visit or a phone call, politely say so. Your friends will understand, and you'll suffer less stress and frustration by meeting your deadlines.

2. **Procrastination**. Ask yourself why you are procrastinating. Is it habit? Fear? Whatever the reason, set about to make a change. Putting things off may eventually lead to a crisis. Set deadlines. Work on projects in small segments.

3. **Crises**. Some crises are inevitable, but many everyday crises can be avoided by organization and planning. Think of ways you can become better organized to prevent crises.

4. **Indecision**. Practice making good decisions. Gather facts, analyze your options, then decide. Don't look back after a decision is made. Not all decisions will be successful. There are always risks involved, but waiting to overcome all objections is a poor use of time.

5. **Perfection**. Strive for excellence, not perfection. Perfection is rarely necessary, and attempting to achieve perfection wastes valuable time. Striving for excellence is

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

attainable, gratifying, and healthy, but striving for perfection is often unattainable, frustrating, and stressful.

6. **Unfinished business**. An activity begun and then abandoned means a waste of time. Decide first which activities are worthy of your time and then pursue them to completion.

7. **Regret**. Regret is a terrible waste of time and an emotional drain. Learn from the past, but don't live in the past. Plan today as much as possible to avoid reasons for serious regret in the future.

Tips for Using Time Effectively

1. **Be assertive**. Speak up for your own rights without being inconsiderate of others. If you need time alone, say so. Learn to say no to commitments for which you don't feel a deep interest or obligation.

2. **Get organized, plan, end clutter**. "A place for everything and everything it its place." Invest time to organize your life and your belongings to save time later.

3. **Don't do unnecessary tasks**. If habit demands that a job be done on a certain schedule, don't follow this habit if it becomes unnecessary. Examine activities to see if they are really necessary.

4. **Do two things at once**. Find ways to combine menial tasks. Talk on the phone and wash dishes; do mending while watching TV.

5. **Use waiting time effectively**. Find ways to use time spent waiting for a child to finish softball practice, time spent in doctor's offices, and standing in checkout lines. Carry postcards or stationery to write notes. Make grocery lists. Make lists of things-to-do-tomorrow. Plan

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Christmas and birthday gifts. Use commuting time to organize thoughts, listen to educational or self-improvement tapes, or dictate your own thoughts.

6. **Set big tasks for "prime" time.** Decide which part of the day is your most productive and assign the most important tasks for that time of day.

7. **Set deadlines.** Avoid procrastination and keep yourself centered on a task by setting a deadline. A reasonable time limit encourages completion by the specified time, especially if you announce your intentions to others.

8. **Make to-do lists.** These can be daily, weekly, or on-going lists of things you need to accomplish. Mainly this applies to daily, routine chores: pick up laundry, buy milk, wrap a gift, write your mother-in-law, etc.

9. **Use the K.I.S.S. method of organization.** Keep It Simple, Stupid! If you have time for special, elaborate, involved activities and enjoy that, then do them. Otherwise, lessen the amount of activity and the stress involved by doing things the simplest way possible. Streamline housekeeping, paperwork, commitments, and obligations to those things really important to you.

10. **Share family and household responsibilities.** Involve your family in household chores. Have a family meeting and delegate tasks. As the "manager" you need to follow through to see these tasks are completed. It takes time and patience to re-educate your family to share responsibility, but it's worth the effort.

Remember: What your life becomes in the future is what you plan for today. Learn to manage your time effectively to accomplish your goals.

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Tips for Using Time Effectively

1. **Be assertive.** Speak up for your own rights without being inconsiderate of others. If you need time alone, say so. Learn to say no to commitments for which you don't feel a deep interest or obligation.

2. **Get organized, plan, end clutter.** "A place for everything and everything it its place." Invest time to organize your life and your belongings to save time later.

3. **Don't do unnecessary tasks.** If habit demands that a job be done on a certain schedule, don't follow this habit if it becomes unnecessary. Examine activities to see if they are really necessary.

4. **Do two things at once.** Find ways to combine menial tasks. Talk on the phone and wash dishes; do mending while watching TV.

5. **Use waiting time effectively.** Find ways to use time spent waiting for a child to finish softball practice, time spent in doctor's offices, and standing in checkout lines. Carry postcards or stationery to write notes. Make grocery lists. Make lists of things-to-do-tomorrow. Plan Christmas and birthday gifts. Use commuting time to organize thoughts, listen to educational or self-improvement tapes, or dictate your own thoughts.

6. **Set big tasks for "prime" time.** Decide which part of the day is your most productive and assign the most important tasks for that time of day.

7. **Set deadlines.** Avoid procrastination and keep yourself centered on a task by setting a deadline. A reasonable time limit encourages completion by the specified time, especially if you announce your intentions to others.

8. **Make to-do lists.** These can be daily, weekly, or on-going lists of things you need to accomplish. Mainly this applies to daily, routine chores: pick up laundry, buy milk, wrap a gift, write your mother-in-law, etc.

9. **Use the K.I.S.S. method of organization.** Keep It Simple, Stupid! If you have time for special, elaborate, involved activities and enjoy that, then do them. Otherwise, lessen the amount of activity and the stress involved by doing things the simplest way possible. Streamline housekeeping, paperwork, commitments, and obligations to those things really important to you.

10. **Share family and household responsibilities.** Involve your family in household chores. Have a family meeting and delegate tasks. As the "manager" you need to follow through to see these tasks are completed. It takes time and patience to re-educate your family to share responsibility, but it's worth the effort.

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Tips for Using Time Effectively

1. Be assertive
2. Get organized, plan, end clutter
3. Don't do unnecessary tasks
4. Do two things at once
5. Use waiting time effectively
6. Set big tasks for "prime" time
7. Set deadlines
8. Make to-do lists
9. Use the K.I.S.S. method of organization
10. Share family and household responsibilities

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Time Management Scale

Danger Signals of Poor Time Management

There are various danger signals that suggest a person can benefit from better time management. Read through the following list and discover if any of these warnings apply to you. Use the scale below to determine your score between 0 and 10 for each item. Record your score in the blank next to each statement and then add these scores to compute your total time management score.

0	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9	10
Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Most of the Time	Always

_____ 1. I am indispensable. I find myself taking on various tasks because I'm the only one who can do them.

_____ 2. Daily crises take up all my time. I have no time to do important things because I'm too busy putting out fires.

_____ 3. I attempt to do too much at one time. I feel I can do it all, and I rarely say no.

_____ 4. I feel unrelenting pressure, as if I'm always behind and have no way to catch up. I'm always rushing.

_____ 5. I'm working habitually long hours, ten, twelve, fourteen, even eighteen hours a day, five, six, and seven days a week.

_____ 6. I constantly feel overwhelmed by demands and details and feel that I have to do what I don't want to do most of the time.

_____ 7. I feel guilty about leaving work on time. I don't have sufficient time for rest or personal relationships. I take worries and problems home.

_____ 8. I constantly miss deadlines.

_____ 9. I am plagued by fatigue and listlessness with many slack hours of unproductive activity.

_____10. I chronically vacillate between unpleasant alternatives.

_____ **Total Score**

Reprinted from Dr. Edward A. Charlesworth and Dr. Ronald G. Nathan, *Stress Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Wellness*, 1984, by permission of Atheneum Publishers, New York.

If you scored less than 35 total points, you may benefit from learning additional time management techniques, but your stress level is probably not significantly affected by time pressure. If you scored 36 to 60, you probably could use time-management training to reduce the risk of potential stress disorders.

If you scored above 60, your life may feel dangerously out of control. People who score over 60 often "don't have time" for training in stress or time management. They may put off indefinitely such important decisions as to stop smoking, begin exercising, spend more time with family and friends, or take vacations. We have a choice whether we wish to allow time to manage us, or we wish to manage time.

Time Robbers

1. **Interruptions**. Don't plan your schedule so strictly that you don't anticipate interruptions. If you don't have time for a visit or a phone call, politely say so. Your friends will understand, and you'll suffer less stress and frustration by meeting your deadlines.

2. **Procrastination**. Ask yourself why you are procrastinating. Is it habit? Fear? Whatever the reason, set about to make a change. Putting things off may eventually lead to a crisis. Set deadlines. Work on projects in small segments.

3. **Crises**. Some crises are inevitable, but many everyday crises can be avoided by organization and planning. Think of ways you can become better organized to prevent crises.

4. **Indecision**. Practice making good decisions. Gather facts, analyze your options, then decide. Don't look back after a decision is made. Not all decisions will be successful. There are always risks involved, but waiting to overcome all objections is a poor use of time.

5. **Perfection**. Strive for excellence, not perfection. Perfection is rarely necessary, and attempting to achieve perfection wastes valuable time. Striving for excellence is attainable, gratifying, and healthy, but striving for perfection is often unattainable, frustrating, and stressful.

6. **Unfinished business**. An activity begun and then abandoned means a waste of time. Decide first which activities are worthy of your time and then pursue them to completion.

7. **Regret**. Regret is a terrible waste of time and an emotional drain. Learn from the past, but don't live in the past. Plan today as much as possible to avoid reasons for serious regret in the future.

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Time Robbers

1. Interruptions
2. Procrastination
3. Crises
4. Indecision
5. Perfection
6. Unfinished business
7. Regret

Reprinted from *Opening the Door to Opportunity: A Manual for Displaced Homemaker Programs* by permission of Career Concepts, P.O. Box 54, Northport, Alabama 35476.

Activity: Where Does the Time Go?

Procedure: Distribute the "Where Does the Time Go?" activity sheets and have students complete and score them.

Ask the students to read through the questions again to find what their answers reveal about their approaches to tasks and time use.

Allow ten minutes for students to respond in writing to the following statement:

> "To improve my time use, I am making these changes in my life . . . "

Time Required: One-half hour

Implementation Tools: "Where Does the Time Go?" Activity Sheet

Reprinted from *Project Discover: Handbook and Curriculum Guide*, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Anoka, Minnesota. Original source unknown.

Where Does the Time Go?

Yes No

____ ____ 1. I make a habit of planning my day and setting goals for what I plan to accomplish.

____ ____ 2. I often feel I have so many tasks before me that I don't know where to begin.

____ ____ 3. If a task is unpleasant, I just dive in and get it over with.

____ ____ 4. I never write down things I have to do; I just memorize them.

____ ____ 5. I welcome new responsibilities, but am careful not to overcommit myself.

____ ____ 6. I often feel I am drowning in paperwork; the top of my desk is buried.

____ ____ 7. When I'm approaching a big deadline, I pace myself by getting a little done each day.

____ ____ 8. I feel guilty about asking someone to do something I am capable of doing myself.

____ ____ 9. When I delegate, I make certain that I am giving out interesting, important tasks, not just busywork.

____ ____ 10. However, I retain authority over the project, and take my share of credit.

____ ____ 11. I preserve large blocks of uninterrupted time to accomplish important things.

____ ____ 12. I encourage friends to call me at work since I'm often not home in the evening.

____ ____ 13. I try to handle matters with a phone call unless a letter is clearly called for.

____ ____ 14. I keep everything; you never know when it might come in handy.

____ ____ 15. When meetings go off on a tangent, I'm usually the one who reminds participants of the issues at hand.

Reprinted from *Project Discover: Handbook and Curriculum Guide,* Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Anoka, Minnesota. Original source unknown.

Yes **No**

____ ____ 16. I'm a perfectionist. It doesn't matter how long a job takes as long as it's done right.

____ ____ 17. I rarely worry about past mistakes or future events that are beyond my control.

____ ____ 18. I weigh carefully even the most inconsequential decisions.

____ ____ 19. I habitually set deadlines for myself and for my family members.

____ ____ 20. I almost always bring work home to finish.

____ ____ 21. I make sure to spend a certain amount of time daily with each of my children, individually.

____ ____ 22. When I get busy at work, my social life goes right out the window.

____ ____ 23. I put a dollar amount on my time and gladly pay someone to do something I could do myself.

____ ____ 24. I leave things until the last minute on purpose, figuring that I work better under pressure.

____ ____ 25. I always have something with me to work on if I'm stuck in a line or in a waiting room.

____ ____ 26. I make the rounds to several grocery stores each week in search of the best food bargains.

____ ____ 27. I confine my volunteer work to a few causes I really feel strongly about.

____ ____ 28. I feel housework is a woman's responsibility; men have more important things to do.

____ ____ 29. I am careful to get enough sleep each night to be at my best the next day.

____ ____ 30. I'd like to get regular exercise, if only I weren't so busy.

Give yourself two points for every odd-numbered statement you marked yes and two points for every even-numbered statement you marked no.

Above 50: Wonderful
40 - 49: Okay
Below 40: You could use some time management skill building.

Lowering Standards

Women who go to school, work, and take care of their families all at the same time are almost always behind on the housework. There are bedspreads to be washed, windows to be cleaned, clothing to be mended; and there's never enough time to get everything done.

Just to get by, some women and men have dropped their standards of home care. Here's what they said:

> *"It would be nice to have clean sheets on the beds every week, but I've gone to every other week instead. It's one less chore to do, and nobody's died from not having fresh sheets."*
>
> *"I always used to fix big dinners—chicken, potatoes, greens, salad, cornbread, and pie—but I've really cut back. And when I do fix a big dinner, I make enough so that there'll be leftovers for the next night."*
>
> *"My mother brought me up to vacuum the rugs and sweep the floors every day. She may have had that kind of time, but I don't. With a little luck, it's once a week at most in our house."*

If you don't clean or cook as often or as well as you used to or your mother or grandmother did, you may feel guilty that you're not taking care of your home and your family properly. Or you may be glad to be free of some chores—like the homemakers who now ask themselves why they used to wax the kitchen floor once a week. Sometimes it's simply a trade off between spending time with your children or spending time on your house.

How To Lower My Standards

If you are spending more time than you would like on household chores, write down five areas in which you could lower your standards. For example, wash the car once a month rather than once a week.

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

4. ______________________________

5. ______________________________

Reprinted from J.S. Kaser and A.C. Frazier, *Juggling Lessons*, 1989, by permission of The NETWORK, Inc., Andover, Massachusetts.

6. If you drop your standards for these tasks, will you feel uncomfortable?

7. How can you help yourself feel more comfortable?

8. How can you respond if others suggest that you're not doing *your* fair share?

Becoming More Efficient in Your Use of Time: Organizing Your Day

Returning to school adds a new dimension to your day. The days will not become longer so that you will have all the time you need, but with a clear focus you can make the best use of the hours you have. Think about it. Who sets the tone for you day? That's right—you do! You can also plan your day to meet your needs and to accomplish your goals. As you begin to take control of the time in your day, you will find that focusing on what is important to you and communicating it in a positive and assertive manner will help you to stay on track.

Think about the last event in your life that required a "new" look at how you were spending your time. Perhaps it was the birth of a baby or taking on a part-time job. When we add or take away activities, we have to adjust how we spend our time: there is one more or one less ball to juggle. Often we think of the new "ball" in our schedule in terms of the balls that come right before or right after it. Sometimes we just throw the new ball up and hope we don't drop them all. We seldom take a look at the balls we're juggling. Maybe there's one that can be taken out!

Effective time management requires looking at how we spend our time. Often we have to change our attitude. The formula "long hours lead to the greatest accomplishment," although long accepted as a truth, is not the best way to approach your day. It keeps us locked into tasks that don't give us much satisfaction of accomplishment.

Reprinted from J.S. Kaser and A.C. Frazier, *Juggling Lessons*, 1989, by permission of The NETWORK, Inc., Andover, Massachusetts.

Time Management Checklist

1. Do you plan what you're going to do each day? Yes ____ No ____

Creating a list of activities for each day and ranking them in terms of importance will guide you in making decisions about what to do first. With this list you're much more likely to accomplish what you set out to do. Whether you write the list down or keep a mental list is up to you. What's most important is knowing what you want to do.

2. Do you delegate some of your responsibilities to others? Yes ____ No ____

Sometimes you may think that you are the only one who can do a specific task. That's true for some tasks but certainly not all of them. Each day ask yourself, "Who else could do this?" Giving others responsibility can help them as well as you.

3. Do you set deadlines for completing your tasks? Yes ____ No ____

Setting realistic deadlines can help you manage your time and achieve your goals. Deadlines serve as motivators; you're more likely to finish a task when there's a deadline.

4. Do you eliminate tasks that are not useful or productive? Yes ____ No ____

Think about the section on lowering your standards (10.03 Activity: "Lower Your Standards"). Did you find tasks that really don't have to be done, or done as often as you had once thought?

5. Do you let others know what you're doing? Yes ____ No ____

Although you may know exactly what you're doing, others need to know, also. You're more likely to get the cooperation and support you need if you let others know what your priorities are for the day. Even letting others know when you're in a bad mood can help.

6. Do you allow transition time as you change from one activity to the next? Yes ____ No ____

People often forget to allow transition time. For example, when you come home at night, do you immediately start fixing dinner even though you just left work or school 15 minutes before? Allow yourself some time to switch gears.

Reprinted from J.S. Kaser and A.C. Frazier, *Juggling Lessons*, 1989, by permission of The NETWORK, Inc., Andover, Massachusetts.

7. Do you ask for help when you need it? Yes ____ No ____

Women, especially, are sometimes so busy taking care of others that they don't ask for the help they need. There's no way you can do everything. Asking for help when you need it is also good role modeling for your children.

8. Do you take some time out of each day for yourself? Yes ____ No ____

Maybe it's a nice hot bath, reading a chapter in a book, or walking to the store. Research shows that the average person has about one and one half hours of free time each day. Make sure that you save some of that time strictly for you.

9. Are you flexible enough to handle interruptions or to switch gears when necessary? Yes ____ No ____

The best made plans may fall apart with a sick child, bad weather, a car that won't start. Good time managers take those events in stride, do what they need to do, and go on.

10. Do you evaluate your day just before you go to sleep? Yes ____ No ____

Take a few moments to ask yourself questions like, "What did I do that went very well today?" "What could I have done better?" "What am I saving for tomorrow?" Over time your answers to these questions will help you be a better time manager.

If you answered eight or more of these questions with a "yes," most likely you're doing a pretty good job of managing your time. If you answered fewer than eight times with a "yes," you may need to work on managing you time more effectively.

The Importance of Goals

Now, we want you to examine what many people discover is their major time waster: a lack of important goals. Goals reflect our purpose in life and have a widespread impact on our lives.

Victor Frankl is a Viennese psychiatrist who survived the horror of the Nazi death camps in World War II. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning,* he describes how those who had a purpose for living were able to withstand torture and starvation. The purpose for living could have been revenge, building a new homeland, or waiting for the Allied forces to arrive. Those without purpose, goals, or positive self-direction died quickly.

Dennis Waitley, in his book *The Psychology of Winning,* tells how the Vietnam POW's who adjusted most easily upon returning to freedom were those with goals. The goals could be as clear and uncomplicated as one POW's goal to become the world's record holder for the number of consecutive sit-ups.

It has been said that two of the greatest tragedies are never to have had a goal or to have reached it. Life is a series of ever-growing accomplishments, and few people have only one goal which they reach and then call it quits. Those who do so face a major change stressor. Consider the man who finally retires and has no new goals. The emptiness can be devastating. As you work through this section on goals, we would like you to consider your future in a number of different ways.

Lifelong Goals

First, imagine that you are very old and you overhear your grandchildren or relatives talking to their friends about you and your life. What would you want them to say about you and your accomplishments? Write down your thoughts on this subject.

Reprinted from Dr. Edward A. Charlesworth and Dr. Ronald G. Nathan, *Stress Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Wellness,* 1984, by permission of Atheneum Publishers, New York.

Next, we would like you to write your own epitaph. An epitaph is an inscription on a tomb and is written as a tribute to the dead person. How would you want others to remember you?

As you list your future goals in this chapter, remember that people are goal-seekers by design. We constantly adjust our self-image and subconscious to help us reach goals. Often, our goals are not planned or they are dictated by negative self-talk such as "I can't do this very well" or "I just know she's not going to like me." Many people actually program themselves to not reach goals by using negative self-talk, failing to define goals clearly, or neglecting to make plans for reaching well-chosen goals.

Most people spend more time planning a party or reading the newspaper than they spend planning their lives. Dennis Waitley describes winners as people with a definite purpose in life. He also says, "If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything." Keep his words in mind as you explore your goals and the value you place on them.

Goal-Getting

Goals must be obtainable, and objectives must be quantifiable. In addition, goals should be flexible in the event that they are blocked by other priorities. If you set as a goal acquisition of a luxury automobile, for example, you may find that you spend more per month than you had expected. That may or may not be compatible with your other goals.

On a different scale, you may have set researching a new project as a goal. If the boss comes in and says the budget has to go to committee tomorrow, your priorities may shift. Your long-term goal is starting the new project, but without money budgeted for it, you may be doing the research out of your own pocket and on your own time. That is why it is helpful to establish flexible plans for achieving long-term goals.

We would like you to do an exercise involving two-minute drills. Use the Goal Cues listed below to help you think of categories of goals.

Goal Cues

- New home
- Home improvement
- Lose weight
- Professional skill
- Long vacation
- Spiritual goals
- New hobby
- Closer friends
- Coworker communication
- Start exercising
- Family communication
- More spontaneity
- Community service
- Increase earnings
- New position
- Family activity
- Become more patient
- Additional education
- Short vacation
- Increase savings
- Pay debts off
- Manage something better
- Stop smoking
- New honor
- Solve a problem
- Play with children
- More marital satisfaction

First, we would ask you to spend two minutes writing down all the goals that you would like to accomplish in the next five years. Limber up your imagination and write down anything that comes to mind. Spend only two minutes on this task.

Next, list all the goals you hope to accomplish next year. Spend only two minutes.

Spend only two minutes writing down all the goals you want to accomplish for the next six months.

Spend another two minutes writing down all your goals for the coming month and include work priorities, self-improvement programs, recreational activities, social functions, family gatherings, and so on.

Top-Priority Goals

Now that you have created these four lists of goals, we would like you to go back and prioritize each goal. Use an A, B, C format.

A's will include all those items that you rank as being most essential and most desired. These are your "must do's." They are often innovative and require creativity.

B's will include all those items that could be put off for a while but that you feel are still important. These are your "desirable to do" or routine duties.

C's are items that could be put of indefinitely with little or no harm. These are your "can waits" and are often trivial.

After you have prioritized your list, combine the three lists into one by including two A items from each of your long-term, one-year, six-month, and one-month goals. Write these down under the heading "A-Priority Goals."

The list you just made should indicate the most important goals you would like to accomplish in the next year. To ensure that this list contains your *most* important goals, we want you to complete another list.

For the next list, imagine you have been told that you have a terminal illness and you will die in one year. During your last year of life you will neither be incapacitated nor experience pain. You will be able to do everything you currently do. Now, write down your goals for the next year if you knew you would die at the end of the year. Title this list "My Goals if Next Year Is the Last Year of My Life."

Compare the two lists you have constructed. If these lists are totally different, you may want to consider more seriously some of the "Goals If Next Year Is the Last Year of My Life" list. Now, combine the A-Priority Goals and "My Goals If Next Year Is the Last Year of My Life" lists to reflect your most important goals accurately.

Now that you have selected your current major life goals, it is essential to set up a timetable for each goal. Indicate time periods in which the goals can reasonably be attained.

You now have important goals to work toward and a timetable to guide you. These are your top priorities. Translate these goals and projects into monthly, weekly, and daily activities. Use these as a guide for your time management for a month.

At the end of the month, review your list to see if you need to make a new list. Sometimes goals are completed, and sometimes uncompleted goals remain high in importance. Other goals may drop in importance. Set aside time every day to work on your A-Priority goals. Emphasize the results that you want rather than the activity, and try to accomplish at least one step toward each goal every day.

Planning Today Means a More Relaxed Tomorrow

When a sailor is preparing for a voyage, he will chart his course toward his destination and determine what prevailing winds he may expect. Seldom will he be able to predict all the changes of weather, but the forethought of planning tells him which reefs to avoid. He will also plan and rehearse his actions should a sudden squall or a prolonged storm appear. We may take an example from the real-life sailor as we sail on the sea of life.

Anything that arouses a stress response can be called a stressor. How we plan our course with these stressors in mind will have an effect on how well we actually deal with the stress. First, we need to have a chart indicating where we are going and what danger we may expect. Next, we need to know the strengths and weaknesses of the vessel on which we are sailing.

If you know that your vocational goal is to become a successful businessman, you should also know your port of destination. Being a successful businessman means many things to many people. Without a specific goal, you may not even know when your ship has come in. A chart does little good unless you set a course, estimate a time of arrival and determine a destination.

The vessel needs to be equipped to make the voyage. If the ship has a slow leak or battered sails, you may need to decide whether to pull into an intermediary port for repairs or continue. If the leak develops a day away from your destination, you may be able to keep the ship afloat until you reach port. So it is with living. If we know we have to finish a project by the deadline, we can often keep going. When the deadline is met, we can make our repairs by relaxing and taking time off.

The need may arise to look once again at our chart and see how far we are from our long-term goals. At this point many people have problems. First, they were not certain how much they have accomplished. With a sense of time urgency, they decide to set off again without planning a period of time to repair the ship. Something in the back of their minds may be saying, "It's better to be doing something without a plan that doing nothing." They forget that making the ship seaworthy and studying the chart to find a plan is far from doing nothing.

Knowing what your goals and plans are gives you a better chance of recognizing the stressors you will encounter and how long you may be exposed to them. Without plans and goals, people never know when they have done enough or where they are on their voyage. It is very hard to relax and take a break if you don't plan for one or forget when it is break time.

An Ounce of Planning Is Worth a Pound of Work

The best way to work effectively toward your A-Priority goals is to plan your day successfully. Here is one of the most powerful rules of time management: *One hour spent in planning saves three to four hours in execution.* Crises can often be avoided with proper planning. Proper planning will also ensure that the efforts you make during the day are directed at your main priorities, the major goals that you have set in your life. Without a plan, without a road map, or without a chart for navigation, a person is left adrift on a sea of stress.

Making mistakes is part of being a fallible human being. But remember the saying, "If you don't have the time to do it right, when will you have the time to do it over?" Plan enough time to do quality work the first time.

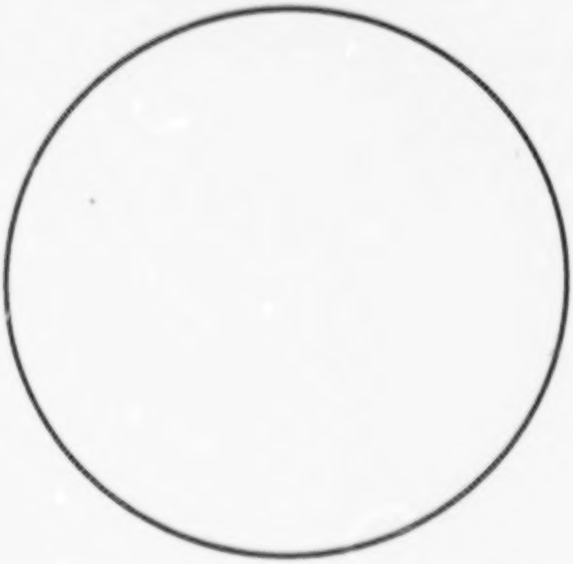
The only alternative to personal planning is reacting to the demands of others. In effect, the decision of how you use your time is made by others who are not likely to have as their goals the same business or personal goals that you have just listed. You can end up on Friday wondering where the week went or on your deathbed wondering where your life went.

Time On Your Hands

How many hours do you currently spend during a typical 24-hour day on each of the following?

_____ 1. Childcare
_____ 2. Household jobs: cleaning, washing clothes, home repairs, yard work
_____ 3. Fun: recreation, hobbies, play, watch T.V.
_____ 4. Personal maintenance (bathing, eating, etc.)
_____ 5. Quality time with spouse
_____ 6. Salaried job/job search
_____ 7. Sleep
_____ 8. Other: specify (study, school, volunteer work, etc.)

I. Now, chart your day using the hours in each activity above as a proportionate slice of the circle below:



II. Discussion Questions:

- How has the use of time changed since being unemployed?
- Are there areas where too much time with nothing to do is becoming a burden?
- In what areas do you see yourself using your time most productively?
- In what areas do you see yourself using your time least productively?
- What type of use of time (doing what activities for how long) contributes to a sense of self worth and energizes?
- Doing what type of activities for how long contributes to feeling down, takes energy from you, and frustrates you?

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

How Can I Save Time?

Directions: Listed below are some proven ways to save up a lot of time for personal use later. From your experience, add to the list and share the results with classmates.

One-Day-At-A-Time Savers

First thing every morning, make a "pending" list of tasks you plan to do during the day. Organize the list so that you can do two things at one time when possible (paste in green stamps while making telephone calls; keep a tape recorder and "Books on Tape" in your car and listen to books being read to you as you drive; tell stories to your children as you run errands).

1. Keep your list of "do's" flexible enough to skip over those activities which you cannot work into your schedule. (You can work them in another day.)
2. When you complete your list of "do's" for the day, ask yourself "why?" for each activity listed. If you can't give yourself a good, justifiable, satisfying answer, mark through the activity and forget about it. You do not have to spend your life on trivia and busywork.
3. During the day, as you complete each task, mark the item off your pending list with gusto and satisfaction.
4. Include in your daily list a plan for spending at least two hours on yourself as a bonus for doing a good job of time management. Or save up these hours until you have an even greater block of time to spend on yourself.

Week Savers

At the beginning of the week, list the major tasks to be accomplished during the week, and set a deadline for accomplishing each task. Then meet the deadline, and **enjoy** the feeling of accomplishment by marking the task off your list and telling yourself how pleased you are with you!

Life Savers

Plan to spend the major part of your life in a career which you truly enjoy.

The double payoff of converting "work" time to "pleasure" time is beyond compare in meaningful living. Do not waste time at a job you do not enjoy. Work toward your goal.

Reprinted from Cameron Colin and Biblios Vance, *Displaced Homemakers Vocational Technical Workshop Guide*, 1982, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

1. Example—If you would like to be a chemical engineer, but cannot afford a four-year degree, complete a two-year program and become a chemical laboratory technician. Take evening courses to earn your engineering degree.

2. Example—If you would love to be an attorney, but do not have the funds or time to complete the extensive school program right now, become a legal assistant and earn your law degree as you work.

Worry Savers

1. Get rid of the clutter around you. Then you can stop wasting so much time hunting and digging around in all that mess. Have a "blast out" house cleaning. Throw away, give away, or sell the excess clutter (unused pots and pans, unworn clothes, outdated records, papers, etc.). You won't believe the feeling of order and control this "catharsis" will give to your life until you try it.

2. Shop and run errands only once per week. Keep a continuous shopping and errand list all week. On shopping/errand day or night, organize your shopping list and write down the places you must go in the order of your stops.

3. When you cook or bake, double or triple the recipe and freeze the extra food.

4. Keep a pocketful of postcards. Eliminate errands and telephone calls by jotting a quick message or request on the postcard.

5. Learn to say no.

6. Use your extra time in feeling good about your accomplishments and in pleasing your best friend (you).

Other Savers

Now list additional time savers which have worker for you. Then share with classmates the results of your list, as well as your ideas about the suggestions listed above.

Example 1. Iron during my favorite television programs.

Example 2. When I am very upset, I do physical work (clean cabinets, pull weeds, clean out the refrigerator, mow the lawn, build or repair something with hammer and nails, etc.). When I stop worrying, at least I have something accomplished and I feel better.

Example 3. I schedule my hardest jobs for the time of day when I function best and schedule my easiest/most enjoyable jobs for when I am tired.

Example 4. I keep a list of small jobs to be done during the "odds and ends" of time during the day. I also keep reading material and writing supplies at hand for unexpected waiting periods during the day.

Example 5. ____

____

Example 6. ____

____

Example 7. ____

____

Example 8. ____

____

Worth Thinking About

Managing time and getting things done does **not** take a special, mysterious ability which only a few people have. To manage your time well, simply make up your mind to organize your life and then get at it!

Weekly Work Plan

List activities done every day.

	What Needs To Be Done?	Who Will Do It?
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report,* June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Monthly Work Plan

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Climb the Stairway!

Now that a time plan has been made, you may wish to check up on yourself. If so . . .

6. **Enjoy Your Reward**
   - More work in less time
   - Wide interests
   - Control of emergencies
   - Fun of telling others about the smart way you conserve time

5. **Take Time Out for Rest**
   - Frequent, short rest pauses give a longer, more productive activity period.
   - Intersperse work with recreation for the good of your soul and body.

4. **Save Steps, Stoops, Motions**—They take precious time.
   - Arrange materials and tools to do job easiest way.
   - Store supplies and tools in a certain place.
   - Make both hands do useful work.
   - Use smooth, curved motions—fewest possible.
   - Use a carrier to take a load instead of "toting."

3. **Glory in "Omits"**—The more the better!
   - Eliminate unnecessary details of a job.
   - Combine details of a job when practicable.
   - Avoid extra handling of tools and materials.
   - Do only those things essential to health, efficiency, morale.

2. **Sharpen Your Sense of Values**—Question every step in doing a job:
   - Why is it necessary?
   - What is its purpose?
   - Where should it be done?
   - When should it be done?
   - Who is best qualified to do it?
   - How is the best way to do it?

1. **Face Yourself**—Recognize need for improving time management.
   - Have a real incentive to make better use of your weekly allotment of 168 hours.
   - Be courageous in discarding valueless old ways, adventurous in finding new and better ones.

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Climb the Stairway!

6. Enjoy Your Reward

5. Take Time Out for Rest

4. Save Steps, Stoops, Motions

They take precious time.

3. Glory in "Omits"

The more the better!

2. Sharpen Your Sense of Values

Question every step in doing a job

1. Face Yourself

Recognize need for improving time management.

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Competency 11.0

Skills for making ends meet financially

11.01 Assess financial attitude.
11.02 Define financial management.
11.03 Identify personal financial assets and liabilities.
11.04 Develop a personal financial plan.
11.05 Identify community resources for financial management.

Competency 11.0
Overview

Knowing how to manage one's finances is important for any student, but particularly for the student who is also a single parent or displaced homemaker. These students may have never dealt with a budget before, or may have only limited experience with financial matters. In addition, the pressures of entering or re-entering school may compound problems of financial management. For these reasons, it is necessary for participants to assess and improve their personal financial management skills.

Competency 11.0 invites participants to examine their budgeting habits and to develop a personal plan for financial management. Participants completing Competency 11.0: Skills for Making Ends Meet Financially will be able to:

11.01 Assess financial attitude
11.02 Define financial management
11.03 Identify personal financial assets and liabilities
11.04 Develop a personal financial plan
11.05 Identify community resources for financial management

Indicator 11.01 offers a number of exercises designed to help participants assess their ideas, feelings, and habits regarding money. Following this, Indicator 11.02 provides an overview of financial management as well as several examples of family budgets and personal financial plans. Indicator 11.03 contains materials relating to participants' assets and liabilities; one section focuses specifically on financial matters related to divorce, and another section provides worksheets for participants to examine their current financial status. Through various activities, participants learn skills to develop a personal budget in Indicator 11.04. Finally, in Indicator 11.05, the instructor has the opportunity to highlight local community resources which may be of assistance to participants.

Competency 11.0: Skills for making ends meet financially

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
11.01 Assess financial attitude	Activity	*Talk About Money*
11.02 Define financial management	Lecture; discussion	*Steps In Money Management*
	Activity	*Martinez Case Study*
	Activity	*The Smith Family Budget*
11.03 Identify personal financial assets and liabilities	Lecture; discussion	*Money Matters*
	Activity	*Income*
	Activity	*Budget Sheet*
	Activity	*Average Monthly Additional Expenses*
11.04 Develop a personal financial plan	Activity	*Setting Up a Personal Budget*
	Activity	*What Income Do We Need?*
	Discussion	*Energy Tips*
	Discussion	*Working Parents: Get the Money You've Earned!*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
11.05 Identify community resources for financial management	Discussion	*Instructor may choose to invite guest speakers from the community*

Resources

Card, Emily. (1990). The Ms. money book. New York: E. P. Dutton.

Card, Emily. (1985). Staying solvent: A comprehensive guide to equal credit for women. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Dahlstrom, Harry. (1988). Out of hock. Franklin, MA: Dahlstrom and Co., Inc.

Pitts, Joyce M. (1987). Managing your personal finances. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Extension Service.

Wintle, Carol. (1985). Your money and your life: Financial planning for low-income working women. Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center.

Talk About Money

Directions: Other members of your household should answer these questions separately if appropriate to your situation. Then compare each other's answers. The similarities and differences may result in a discussion of money attitudes and practices.

1. If you received $5,000 tax-free, what would you do with it?

$________ for ________________ $________ for ________________

$________ for ________________ $________for ________________

2. Rank the following activities, using 1 to indicate what you would enjoy doing most and 6 to indicate what you would enjoy least.

_____ a few extra hours on the job

_____ spending time with friends

_____ some quiet time to myself

_____ a night on the town

_____ physical activity

_____ organizing a birthday party

3. If you had to make a major cut in your current spending, what area would you cut first?

4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Circle "A" if you agree, "D" if you disagree)

A D I'm basically too tight with money.
A D Other members of my household are usually tight with money.
A D Equality in decision-making is important to me.
A D I feel good about the way financial decisions are made in my household.
A D Sometimes I buy things I don't need just because they're on sale.
A D I believe in enjoying today and letting tomorrow worry about itself.

5. I'd like to see my family spend less money on ____________________

and more dollars for ______________________________.

Reprinted from *Getting Control of Your Finances*, with permission of Minnesota Extension Service, University of Minnesota, Educational Department System, St. Paul, Minnesota.

6. What money problem is the most frequent cause of argument?

7. What was the most sensible thing you've done with money in the last two years?

   The most foolish?

8. Do you know the dollar amount for the following:

   Family take-home income: $________________
   Rent or mortgage payment: $________________
   Money spent on food each month: $________________
   Monthly car payment: $________________

Steps in Money Management

Here are six basic steps in money management:

- **Keep a monthly record of all spending**

You need to know where money is going before making any financial plans. Keeping a record for at least three months gives a better picture of spending. Don't forget quarterly or yearly items.

- **Identify total monthly income**

Once you know where your money is going, it is just as important to know where it's coming from. Consider both money and non-money income (employer benefits and home production).

Employer benefits may include:
- life and health insurance
- sick leave
- retirement benefits
- unemployment insurance
- pension plans
- workmen's compensation
- stock purchase plans

Unpaid home production may include:
- child care
- meal preparation
- car or home repairs
- laundry
- snow removal
- others

Ask participants what it would cost to hire someone else to do these tasks.

- **Identify your values and set goals.**

Something we hold important or worthwhile is a value, while what we are willing to work or strive for is a goal. Setting short-term, intermediate and long-range goals, which reflect personal values, is a prerequisite step to managing money.

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart & Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, with permission of Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

- **Estimate expenses.**

In order to prepare for developing a plan, or budget one must estimate expenses. Spending records, if available, can serve as a basis for a budget. If records are not available, memory, checkbook stubs, receipts and old bills can serve as reminders. There are two types of expenses:

- *Fixed or committed expenses* which include the regular, set expenses for rent or mortgage, utilities, insurance, car payments, etc. They are non-negotiable costs which represent some of the fundamental needs of a family for security and safety.
- *Flexible expenses* are more variable. These amounts fluctuate and tend to be more occasional in nature, i.e., gifts, household items, clothing, transportation, food, or entertainment.

Categories for both fixed and flexible expenses will differ for each individual/family, so participants should add or delete categories to reflect their unique situation. Categories will also differ before and during periods of unemployment.

It is recommended that budget planners spend some time analyzing their past spending habits. They need to ask themselves, "Can we continue our present pattern of spending? Will a new situation or condition alter spending? What expenses can we reduce or eliminate?" Answers to questions such as these determine amounts to be allocated to various budget categories.

- **Implement your spending plan.**

Give the new budget a try by recording actual expenses for at least one month. Develop a system for saving receipts or noting expenses. Then at the end of each week, add the amounts spent in each category. At the end of the month, total the expenses and compare them with the amounts budgeted.

- **Evaluate and make adjustments.**

Examine carefully what you actually spent compared with what you planned on spending. Are the figures close, or are they far apart? Why? In what ways will estimates need to be revised? Will it require even more self-discipline and management next month? Understand that a budget is a "working document" that changes as a family strives for a "balanced" budget - one that "fits" the family. As circumstances change, the budget must be adjusted to reflect new goals and needs.

In conclusion, the money management steps just outlined barely scratch the surface in ultimately gaining financial control. The spending plan, or budget, however, is a fundamental tool in managing money. Building skills in handling a budget is important in gaining control over one's finances. It helps people see that they do have the power and competence to solve their problems.

Martinez Case Study

Directions: Read the following case study and on the following page draft a monthly budget for the Martinez family that reflects their needs and wants.

> Maria and Tony and their four children, ages 13, 11, 7 and 3 live in a large rural community in southern Wisconsin. Tony was laid off from his position with a large manufacturing firm. His unemployment payments will run out in one month. They have $10,000 in savings. Maria landed a full-time job as a custodian at the school. It pays $6.05 per hour. Tony has started studying accounting at the Vo-Tech, which costs an average of $30.00 per month. They pay $265.00 per month on the house mortgage. The 1981 station wagon they drive is paid for. Keeping up with the children's activities (junior hockey, choir practice, paper route, etc.) leaves little time for entertainment, although Maria and Tony enjoy bowling or an occasional movie with friends and time for Maria's woodworking hobby. They and the kids were planning a week-long trip to Minnesota next summer to visit relatives—a long awaited family vacation.

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart & Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, with permission from Minnesota Curriculum Service Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Martinez Budget

Monthly Income: ____________

____

Total Income $ __________

Monthly Fixed Expenses:

Mortgage ____________

Utilities ____________

Insurance ____________

Savings ____________

Other: ____________

Child Care ____________

Contributions/Gifts ____________

Household ____________

Other: ____________

Flexible Expenses:

Food __________

Clothing __________

Recreation/Entertainment ___________

Education __________

Transportation __________

B. Total Fixed Expenses $________ **C. Total Flexible Expenses** $__________

Add total fixed expenses and total flexible expenses and subtract that sum from the total income (line A) to determine how much the family has "left over"—their "cushion" for the month.

1. Monthly income total = $____________ (A)
2. Fixed and flexible expenses total = $____________ (B+C)
3. Money remaining = $____________ A-(B+C)

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart & Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, with permission from Minnesota Curriculum Service Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

The Smith Family Budget

Category	Amount Budgeted per Month
Housing	$510
Services/Utilities	60
Insurance	42
Savings	50
Household/Furnishings	55
Food	275
Clothing	105
Transportation	175
Child Care	240
Medical/Health	25
Entertainment/Recreation	65
Miscellaneous	30
TOTAL	**$1632.00**

1. $1632 is the NET INCOME the family needs.

   a. What gross annual income must Mr. and/or Mrs. Smith earn?

   ____

   b. How much is that per month? __________

   c. How much per hour? __________

   Note: Average withholding = 20% gross pay. Gross pay minus withholding (20%) = net pay. Gross pay = net pay x .80.

2. What kinds of jobs will provide the Smiths with the income they need to support the family on a budget at $1632 per month?

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart & Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, with permission from Minnesota Curriculum Service Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Money Matters

Especially at this point in your life. A guide to help you keep your wits after the divorce.

Do you know anyone who would even consider building a home without a plan? Surely not. There must be a contractor to coordinate the many important jobs: plumbing, electrical, roofing, mechanical, painting, landscaping, and more.

Divorce involves more than simply terminating a relationship. Divorce involves wholesale life changes for husbands, wives, and children. And you are the contractor. Like building a home, if you get divorced without a plan to guide you into your new life, you may find that it's harder to make your divorce work than it was to make your marriage work.

Why? Your assets will be divided. The amount of money available—and the expenses—will change. You will have more responsibilities and will be making decisions alone. Many people think about divorce, and one out of two do it. And those who do it find that while divorce eliminates one set of problems, it raises lots of new ones that must be dealt with immediately.

Considering divorce? There are upsides: a release of tension and a perceived well-being. But of course there are downsides: breach of a relationship with continued contact, possible relocation, a changed standard of living, and placing important issues in the hands of the judicial system.

You need to focus on more than just the immediate questions that most often come to mind: "When will I be out of this relationship?" "Who gets the furniture?" "Who gets custody?" "Who pays what?" "Who gets what?"

Reprinted from Jan L. Warner, "Money Matters," *Family Advocate*, Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

Become informed

- Formulate long-range goals. If you don't organize and plan now, important details will slip through the cracks.
- Separate your emotions from the practical issues. Emotional decisions are short-term and have no place in your decision-making process. Then you must understand your options before you make decisions.
- Then, have your lawyer give you a basic understanding of how the court system operates so you will know what to expect and when. Since most decisions made by a divorce court are based on the facts in a particular case, there can be no guarantees.
- You need to know the range of possible results, the strong and weak points of your case, the best and worst result you can anticipate, the probable length of time to complete your case, and the probable cost. Your lawyer is trained to help clarify these areas.

In addition to the emotional trauma, you must be prepared to deal with economic matters. So discuss the following issues with your lawyer:

Changing homes

You may have to sell the family home.

- Are there alternatives? What about refinancing a second mortgage, a home-equity loan, asking parents or relatives to help you?
- The cost of moving should be considered in your settlement.
- What's the best way to deal with school changes for the children?
- Think in net figures since the selling price of the home will be reduced by the mortgage payoff, closing costs, lawyers' fees, taxes, and possibly other debts.
- The cost of disputes over furniture and personal property may be more expensive than buying new furniture.
- Become aware of all tax consequences before you complete any sale. The last thing you want is to find yourself borrowing money to pay taxes you didn't expect.

- If you are planning to buy another home, you need to shop for mortgages. Find out what price home you need to buy to defer the tax consequences.

Insurance matters

- Never cancel any insurance. Without coverage, a claim or casualty loss could wipe out the assets your have accumulated.
- If you leave home, you need a separate policy to cover personal property you take with you. You may need a separate auto policy. Most property insurance is written for the family unit. When that unit breaks up, cars may be transferred and your property may belong to someone else. This means that there may not be coverage. So find out what your policies cover. And make sure to get it in writing from the agent.
- If you move, you made need insurance coverage for your property during transit.
- Keep an amount in a savings account equal to your deductibles.
- Make sure your coverage limits are sufficient to *replace* your property at today's value, not its depreciated value. Obtain the replacement costs.
- Jewelry, furs, and other valuables must be listed, appraised, and covered separately.
- List and photograph or videotape all of your personal property and put the film record in a safe place.

Health coverage essential

You must review your health-insurance coverage—noncovered medical expenses can wipe you out.

- Without planning, changes in health-care coverage can be risky and cause continued litigation and expense.
- If you rely on coverage at work, find out how to continue coverage on the noncovered spouse and children. And make sure that the coverage is with a financially stable insurance company. If an employer secures health coverage from someone other than an insurance company, or if there have been frequent shifts in the insurance plan, watch out!

- In some employee health plans, term life and disability insurance are included as benefits. Check into them.
- If there's not coverage at a place of employment or current health insurance will not cover the family, begin looking for major medical and hospitalization alternatives immediately.
- Plan now for pre-existing conditions that might make it difficult for the nonworking spouse or children to secure or continue health coverage.
- Always read the policy and do not rely on a brochure or the representations of an agent.
- Never cancel any insurance policy until you know what is going to replace it. Never buy a policy until you know what's covered and when coverage begins.
- If one spouse was or is in the military, check on medical benefits that may be available.
- See which medical, dental, and prescription bills are not covered by health insurance.

Basics of alimony and support

Each state has laws that govern alimony and support. Always review these with your lawyer.

- Review the tax consequences of what you are going to pay or receive—before you make final arrangements.
- If a child is disabled, then there must be planning for both regular payment and special education. Any settlement should be structured around public benefits and should avoid reimbursement to the government.

Plan for child's education

Generally, both parents are responsible for a child's college education depending on their income and assets.

- Determine if a fund should be established to assure coverage of educational obligations. If so, in what form, how should it work, and how can it best be funded?
- Find out what financial aid by way of grants or loans may be available.
- Check into special programs for disabled children and how to avoid reimbursement.

Support security is essential
Plan for ways to protect support and alimony awards in case the supporting spouse dies or becomes disabled. Look into life insurance, long-term disability, and trusts that are designed to continue benefits.

- If you have an insurable interest in the life of another, you should consider purchasing an insurance policy on that life to secure the obligation.
- If someone other than you is making the premium payment, always make sure that you get regular proof of both premium payment and beneficiary designation.

Credit and debt payments

- Before the divorce, check into the status of your credit. Just because both of you use an account does not mean that both of you have credit ratings and credit histories.
- Establish your own credit history before you divorce. Order your credit report.
- If there have been credit problems in the past, there are ways to re-establish credit. Check into them, but don't pay exorbitant fees for what you can do yourself.
- Just because a court order requires your spouse to pay your debt, you are not absolved of responsibility to the creditor because the court cannot release you from the debt.
- The filing of bankruptcy either during or after the divorce may affect your debts and your settlement. See your lawyer about this.

Pensions and Social Security
In most states, retirement plans are divisible on divorce. But there are many different kinds of retirement plans and many complex rules.

- Federal law gives a spouse the right to decide how pension benefits are distributed. Unless waived in writing, many pensions are automatically paid on a joint and survivor basis.
- There may be questions about such things as taxation and integration of benefits with Social Security. Your lawyer is trained to assist you in all of these areas.

Learn to protect your money

Some people involved in a divorce can't wait to get their hands on a big, court-ordered settlement. But 90 percent of those who get a lump sum today will not have it in five years.

- You can't afford to be suckered into a high-risk and high-return deal. You could be among the consumers who lost more than $500 million in the last two years to unscrupulous planners and salesmen.
- Understand what you're getting before you write that check. Before you invest in anything, including life insurance, make sure you find out about the amount of sales commissions and how much you will be penalized if you decide to remove your money during the first four years.
- Even annuities and guaranteed investment products may be risky. Always check out the financial stability of the company behind the product.
- Almost anyone can use the title "financial planner," and between 150,000 and 500,000 do. Don't be fooled by designations. You might not even need a planner.
- First, determine if you need a planner. Then find out for how long and where planners and salesmen have been in business. Get bank references, client references, and references from professionals. Talk to your lawyer. Then check out the references.

Estate planning is important

Of all adults in the United States, 70 percent have never written a will. If you already have one, you should change it after divorce or remarriage. Discuss this with your lawyer.

- Your estate can be structured to provide for your children through trusts and guardianships.
- Always spell out guardianship provisions in your will. If you don't, a court will do it for you—when you aren't able to argue.
- There are many kinds of trusts available, and insurance policies can have trusts as beneficiaries. Choose custodians and trustees carefully.
- Look into living wills and make sure that you have a power of attorney in place so that someone

can make these and other decisions if you become disabled.

- Don't forget to ask about the tax consequences of the way your estate is planned, and watch out for gift taxes before you make a transfer.

Don't forget Uncle Sam

"Divorce" means much more than terminating a marriage. Any time there is a transfer or payment, either now or in the future, you must consider income, gift, and estate-tax consequences.

- Sometimes, people don't know that a gift has been made and a tax is due until it's too late. How property is titled and who has the control over the property can determine whether there is a tax or not.
- Before you begin paying or receiving funds, transferring or receiving property, paying debts, or signing wills and trusts, make sure all of your tax questions are identified and answered.
- Try to get indemnified from the expense of tax audits and back taxes and penalties if you didn't earn the income declared on tax returns filed.
- Legal expenses attributable to tax advice are deductible. Ask your lawyer about this.

Finally, make a budget

Sound easy? It's not. Whether you are paying or receiving, you will have fewer assets, less income, and more expenses. With your lawyer, you must try to predict today your financial future. This is no easy task. You should be realistic and candid and be prepared to back up your estimates with facts.

If you decide to get divorced, there is much more to know and to do. When it comes to divorce, your lawyer is the captain of the ship. Be prepared for a rough voyage. But as you become informed, you will find that your lawyer is the person most able to answer your questions.

Income

Estimated Monthly Income

Source of Income	Amount
Net Wages or Salary of:	
Self	______
Spouse	______
Other:	______
Net Profits (business, farm, etc.)	______
Transfer payments (child support, public assistance, inheritance, etc.)	______
Interest or Dividends	______
Other: (children's jobs, garage sales, rent income, etc.)	______
TOTAL	______

Questions to consider:

1. Have you included income from all family members, including children?
2. How secure is the continuation of each source of income?
3. How certain is the amount of transfer payments? What might cause the loss of these payments?
4. What are the deductions from your paycheck? Are the mandatory ones correct for your current situation? Do the voluntary ones still reflect your desires?

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart & Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, with permission from Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Budget Sheet

Directions: Fill in the appropriate estimated monthly income on the lines provided.

1. **Monthly net pay:** ____________

2. **Other Income:**
    - Social Security ____________
    - AFDC ____________
    - Food Stamps ____________
    - Investments ____________
    - Pension ____________
    - Other ____________

3. **Total Monthly Income** ____________

Monthly Expenses (Basic Needs)

Food and school lunches ____________
Childcare expenses ____________
Rent/mortgage/Real Estate Taxes ____________
Utilities
    Electricity ____________
    Telephone ____________
    Water/Sewer ____________
    Heat ____________
    Other ____________
Transportation
    License, Insurance, Tires, Repairs (monthly average) ____________
    Gas and oil ____________
    Public Transportation ____________
    Car Payments ____________

4. **Total Monthly Basic Expenses** ____________

5. **Total Monthly Income (line 3)** ____________

6. **Subtract Total Monthly Basic Expenses (line 4)** ____________

7. **Amount left for additional expenses** $____________

Reprinted with permission from Karen S. Isebrands, Nicolet Area Technical College, Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

Average Monthly Additional Expenses

Checking Account Service Charge ________
Clothing, shoes ________
Disposable diapers or diaper service ________
Laundromat/Dry cleaning ________
Hair cuts, perms ________
Household supplies (non-edible), laundry soap, etc. ________
Life insurance, health insurance ________
Medical (doctor, hospital, dental) ________
Medication, eye glasses ________
Non-prescription medicines and drug supplies ________
Children's school books, supplies ________
Renter/homeowner's insurance ________
Pet food, vet bills ________
School loan payments ________
Payments to lawyer, credit cards, time payments ________
Furniture and appliance repair/replacement ________
Gifts (X-mas, birthday, etc.), cards, postage, newspaper, etc. ________
Entertainment (video rental, camera film and development) ________
Savings ________
Other ________

8. Total additional expenses: **$**________

9. Amount left for additional expenses (line 7) **$**________

Total additional expenses (line 8) **$**________

Balance left **$**________

Reprinted with permission from Karen S. Isebrands, Nicolet Area Technical College, Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

Activity: Setting Up a Personal Budget

Primary Goal: To learn the necessary steps in setting up a budget.

Title: Setting Up a Personal Budget

Purpose: To help participants look at total net income, total expenditures, allocations of monies, and to determine more effective budgetary control procedures.

Materials: Handout: "Personal Budget Sheet"

Activity: Have a general discussion with the group on beginning budgeting procedures, such as determining the amount of income from all sources, and total number of expenditures. Have students complete the Handout entitled, "Personal Budget Sheet." Use results in personal counseling sessions as some students may not wish to discuss their personal income with the group.

Time and Group Number: 30-45 minutes; 15-20 participants.

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Personal Budget Sheet

The following is a personal budget sheet for you to complete for your own pay period, whether it is weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, etc.

Instructions:

a. Note your income for the pay period.
b. Determine your expenses for the pay period. (Example: If your monthly rent is $300 and your pay period is weekly, you would note $75 in the space provided for rent payment.)
c. Total your expenses for the pay period and subtract them from your income. This determines your non-budgeted income for the pay period.

I. **Anticipated income per pay period:**
Your income: ______________
Spouse's income: ______________
Total net income per pay period: ______________

II. **Anticipated expenses per pay period:**
Rent/house payment: ______________
Utilities:
Water and Sewage: ______________
Electricity: ______________
Gas: ______________
Telephone: ______________
Auto. payment: ______________
Auto. expenses:
(gas, oil, etc.) ______________
Groceries: ______________
Furniture payment: ______________
Church/Contributions: ______________
Credit card payments: ______________
Insurance: ______________
Savings: ______________
Clothing: ______________
Miscellaneous:
(doctor bills, auto repair, entertainment, emergencies) ______________
Other: ______________
Total expenses per pay period: ______________

III. **Amount left over at end of pay period:**
Total net income: ______________
Total expenses: ______________
Total non-budgeted income remaining at end of pay period: ______________

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report*, June, 1987, by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Budget Planning Helps:

Ways I can think of to increase my income: ____________________

____

____

____

____

Ways I can think of to reduce my expenses: ____________________

____

____

____

____

How I plan to use any non-budgeted income: ____________________

____

____

____

____

What Income Do We Need?

Directions: Use this worksheet to estimate a budget for 2-3 years from now. Then use your budget figures to answer the following questions.

1. Our budget calculations indicate that we will need the following minimum income in 2-3 years time:

   Net income $__________ (amount budgeted)

   Gross income $__________(net x .80)

   Monthly wage $__________ (gross ÷ 12 months)

   Hourly wage $__________ (gross ÷ 2080 hours)

2. What kinds of jobs will enable you to live the way you want, according to your projected budget? Refer to Occupational Outlook Handbook or other sources of wage information.

3. Cut out three or four employment ads from the classified section of the newspaper. Find ads that pay the gross amount you will need.

4. With the information you have so far, what alternatives do you have for obtaining financial independence?

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart & Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, with permission from Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Energy Tips

1. Lower your thermostat. For every degree it is turned down for a 24 hour period, 3% is saved. For every degree of nighttime setback, 1% is saved. Money will be saved by turning down the heat at night or when the house is empty for 6 hours or more. Many people will tell you that the furnace has to work twice as hard to bring the house back to desired temperature after setback. Studies have shown, though, that setback saves. Setback should be restricted to about 10 degrees (or whatever your health requires!). If you have a newer, properly sized furnace, setback should be less than 10 degrees.

   Also, don't overset the thermostat to warm the house faster. This only over-shoots the temperature you really want.

2. Change or clean furnace filters once a month. When they are dirty, air cannot move through them freely, restricting heat distribution into the house.

3. Keep cold air returns free of obstruction. Heating systems need balanced intake and output.

4. Keep fireplace dampers closed. Install glass doors, and do not use a fireplace when the temperature is below 40 degrees.

5. Keep storm windows closed and windows locked.

6. Run exhaust fans when necessary if excess moisture is present.

7. Don't over-humidify. If windows frost up or if water condenses on the inside of the house on windows, too much moisture may be present.

8. Avoid venting the clothes dryer inside for heat. Too much moisture will be added, as well as fine particles of dust which are irritating to lungs. Nylon stockings do not filter this dust adequately.

9. Use common sense. Keep doors closed, don't let the kids run in and out frequently. Put on warmer clothes. Don't heat the house with the oven. Use heating fuel consciously, not just automatically.

10. Use air conditioners on low settings (no lower than 78 degrees). Keep coils clean as well as filters.

Reprinted by permission of Rod Richardson, Wisconsin Power and Light.

11. Try using a cold wash and rinse for laundry. Liquid detergents will be necessary, but they are designed to work in all temperatures. Adjust water levels to match loads.

12. When drying clothes, use the dryer for consecutive loads to keep the dryer warm. Clean the filter after every load. Don't over-dry.

13. Use a dehumidifier only if absolutely necessary. They can be as costly to run as an air conditioner. Keep coils clean, and do not position near a sump pump.

14. Using an automatic dishwasher can be economical if you restrict use to once a day. Allow dishes to air dry. Use high quality soap to avoid spotting rather than hotter water in your water heater.

15. If a freezer saves at least what it costs to operate in food costs, it is worth using. Open only when necessary, and defrost when frost is 1/4 inch thick. Manual defrost models use less energy than do self-defrost models.

16. Refrain from using older side-by-side refrigerators as they use large amounts of energy to operate. Unplug units that are not being utilized fully (the extra one in the rec room that holds ice cubes and soda!). Keep coils clean.

17. If you use a waterbed, insulate it with 1/2 inch of foam insulation around the sideboards and under the mattress. (However, check to see if this might eliminate any manufacturer's warranty still in effect.) Use the heater on a timer. Keep the bed made!

18. Water heaters are very, very large users of electricity or gas. Set temperature at 120 degrees. If the unit is very old draining may cause permanent leakage of the valve, so be careful of this. Install a flow restrictive showerhead. Insulate water pipes and the water heater (if it won't void any warranty). Fix any water leaks. Turn unit off if leaving for a period of time (weekend, etc.). Use common sense and limit hot water use.

19. If you plug your car in at night in the winter, your electric bill can rise substantially. Operate the engine heater on a timer set to turn the unit on 2 hours before you need to drive.

20. Consider new compact fluorescent lights when replacing light bulbs.

21. Be very cautious when using electric space heaters. They cost almost 10 cents per hour to operate (about $70.00 a month if running all the time).

Working Parents: Get the Money You've Earned!

File for the Earned Income Credit—the Working Family's Tax Benefit.

You're probably eligible for the federal government's **Earned Income Credit** if you're a working parent with at least one child at home and you earned less than $20,264 in 1990.

This means as much as $953 in your pocket. A check could be sent directly to you—from the IRS.

You can get a check even if you earned too little to owe any income tax.

The **Earned Income Credit** is easy to get. No lines to stand in. No red tape. All you need to do is file a federal income tax return (form 1040 or 1040A) and fill out the line on the **Earned Income Credit.**

If you earned too little to owe income tax, the IRS will send you a check. If you owe income tax, the **Earned Income Credit** reduces what you pay.

There's another way to get your **Earned Income Credit.** Your employer can add it to your pay over the course of the year.

For more information, ask your employer or call the IRS toll free at **1-800-829-1040.**

Reprinted from the Earned Income Credit Campaign—A campaign made possible by the generous support of advocacy, business, labor, non-profit, and religious organizations and of state and local officials.

Competency 12.0

Skills to develop a personal support system

12.01 Define support system.
12.02 Identify personal areas in need of support.
12.03 Identify community resources for support systems.
12.04 Demonstrate skills to develop a personal support system.

Competency 12.0
Overview

In times of stress or transition, a network of friends, relatives, and others can be an important source of emotional, spiritual, and financial support. For the single parent, such support networks can be crucial in managing the conflicting demands of school, work, and family. Most of us have some sort of personal support system already in place; indeed, we probably take it for granted and don't particularly think about it. Almost everyone, however, can benefit from a closer look at their support structures. Under closer examination, areas which are lacking in support often become apparent.

In Competency 12.0, participants will develop an understanding of support networks, and will have the opportunity to critique and improve their own systems of support. Participants completing Competency 12.0: Skills to Develop a Personal Support System will be able to:

12.01 Define support system
12.02 Identify personal areas in need of support
12.03 Identify community resources for support systems
12.04 Demonstrate skills to develop a personal support system

Indicator 12.01 contains an overview of networking and provides examples of various types of personal support systems. In Indicator 12.02, participants complete an activity which helps them identify areas of support needing further development. Indicator 12.03 offers information on community resources for support networks, specifically information on support relating to child care. Instructors may also choose to include information pertaining to local community resources available to participants. Finally, in Indicator 12.04, participants complete an activity which tests their ability to recognize and improve sources of support.

Competency 12.0: Skills to develop a personal support system

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
12.01 Define personal support	Lecture; discussion	*The Single Parent and the Networking Process*
	Activities	*Activities 1-4*
12.02 Identify personal areas in need of support	Activity	*My Social Support Network*
	Activity	*Build a Support Network*
12.03 Identify community resources for support systems	Discussion	*Child Care Checklist*
	Discussion	*Choosing Child Day Care*
	Lecture; discussion	*Instructor should bring in community resource people as guest speakers*
12.04 Demonstrate skills to develop a personal support system	Activity	*Network Map*

Resources

McLanahan, S; Wedemeyer, N; and Adelberg, T. (1981). Network structure, social support, and psychological well-being in the family. Journal of Marriage and the Family, August, pp. 601-612.

Lindblad-Goldberg, M., Dukes, J. (1985). Social support in black, low-income, single-parent families: Normative and dysfunctional patterns. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 55 (1), pp. 42-58.

Letin, L., and Sussman, M.B. (1983). The Ties That Bind: Men's and Women's Social Networks. New York: The Haworth Press.

The Single Parent and the Networking Process

Introduction

Research regarding female single parents and networking suggests the following hypotheses:

1. Looseknit networks are supportive for women who are attempting to establish a new identity.
2. Closeknit networks are supportive for women who are attempting to maintain existing identities.
3. The role-orientation of the single mother and her network may vary over time.

Single parents in the research study who expressed the greatest distress appeared to be change-oriented and therefore felt restricted by a network system that also was restrictive. On the other hand, those single parents anxious for a greater level of stability in their lives were uncomfortable with a more casual, loose networking process. The third hypothesis leads to a general understanding that the interaction of self and supportive persons will change over time.

Whether it has been labeled as networking or even recognized as a formal process, it is important to realize that a process of seeking support systems is in effect most of the time, in some form or another, by most everybody. Research studies reveal that accidentally established systems, once identified, were logically based on the level of need of the individuals involved.

Taking the position that support systems do have a valuable place in enhancing the adaptation to single parenthood, as well as assisting the single

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

parent's movement from adaptation to some state of growth beyond acceptance and adaptation, then it becomes appropriate and important to be able to lead the single-parent to a planned process.

The third hypothesis provides the starting point for developing an approach to networking that can be consciously and consistently applied. If networking is happening anyway, it will be more effective if fully understood.

Points to Remember:

Definition of a support system known as a **network:**

A series of personal contacts through which the individual maintains a social identity and receives emotional support, material aid and services, information and new social contacts.

Three kinds of support systems:

1. Direct services—relevant to the specific problem providing:
   a. material aids
   b. advice and information

2. Emotional support—relationships providing:
   a. security
   b. intimacy
   c. reassurance

3. Social integration—community integration providing:
   a. accessibility to new information
   b. new contacts

Characteristics of Networking

1. **Networking is a process of cultivating.**

People's status in life is dynamic—always shifting and changing. Therefore, support systems must also shift and change to be able to be responsive to the needs and values of the persons involved.

2. **Networking is a process involving two or more persons with a common interest.**

A successful network is one that produces a desirable outcome for participants. The positive outcome is the product of a shared interest of network participants. It is important to determine the common interest(s) that bind the network.

3. **Networking Information.**

Support Network: a series of personal contacts through which the individual maintains social identity and receives emotional support, material aid and services, information and new social contacts.

Definitions:

Direct Services—material aid, advice, information, relevant to specific problem

Emotional Support—relationships which provide security, intimacy, reassurance of growth

Social Integration—integration into community services as well as accessibility of new information and new social contacts

Characteristics:

a. Anchorage: the center of the network, the ego—Who's at the center?
b. Density: the degree to which network members interact with each other—How often?
c. Content: the degree to which network members have multiple or single ties—Who knows who?
d. Direction: the degree to which relationships are symmetrical—Who gets what?
e. Durability: the degree that relationships are based on obligations—Who owes what?
f. Intensity: the depth of the obligation—How much? How long?

g. Frequency: the amount of contact between members—How many times?
h. Range: the size of the network—How big?

Types of Networks:

1. Close-knit: networks composed of dense, multiple, durable and intense ties, and are positively associated with provision of services and emotional supports.

2. Loose-knit: networks positively associated with the communication of new information and the development of new social contacts.

Examples of Networks:

A. The Family of Origin Close-Knit Support Group Networking System:
   - The single parent turns to the family of origin as main source of direct services and emotional support. Contact with resources outside family is limited, usually not encouraged.

B. The Conjugal Support Group Networking System:
   - The parent has a mate, boy or girl friend, or supportive ex-spouse. This network may be close-knit with all support services coming from couple and family of origin member; or the network may be loose-knit with services provided by mate, new friends, and a community-oriented outlook.

C. The Extended Family Loose-Knit Support Group Networking System:
   - The single/married parent includes family, kin, friends, community resources as distinct sources of services; these separate distinct groups (clusters) may or may not overlap.

Three kinds of support systems:

1. **Direct services**—relevant to the specific problem providing:
    a. material aids
    b. advice and information

2. **Emotional support**—relationships providing:
    a. security
    b. intimacy
    c. reassurance

3. **Social integration**—community integration providing:
    a. accessibility to new information
    b. new contacts

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Networking

Points to Remember:

Definition of a support system known as a **network**:

A series of personal contacts through which the individual maintains a social identity and receives emotional support, material aid and services, information and new social contacts.

Three kinds of support systems:

1. Direct services—relevant to the specific problem providing:
   a. material aids
   b. advice and information

2. Emotional support—relationships providing:
   a. security
   b. intimacy
   c. reassurance

3. Social integration—community integration providing:
   a. accessibility to new information
   b. new contacts

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Networking
Activity #1

Purpose: To help participants gain insight into what a network is; what type of personal support networks they may have already in place; if personal support networks should be continued and/or extended.

Title: Understanding Network Systems

Activities:

1. Lead participants in a discussion of definitions and terms outlined in the "Single Parent and the Networking System" and "Characteristics of Networking."
2. Draw a "map" of your perceived support network.
   a. Participant is given small disks on which is written own name and network member's names.
   b. Disks are arranged (taped) on a larger piece of paper.
   c. Lines are drawn between network members who know each other and actively interact.
3. Participants are asked to describe their network by describing the existing relationships.

Time and Group Number: 1 to 1 1/2 hours, 20-25 participants who may work in groups if desired. Allow enough time for each member to make a statement about his/her support group.

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Networking
Activity #2

Purpose: To help participants understand both the positive and negative implications of depending upon a close-knit "Family of Origin" support group networking pattern.

Title: Looking at the Family of Origin Close-Knit Support Group Networking System

Activity: Lead participants in a discussion of the characteristics of family of origin relationships (See Activity #2 Handout)

Time and Group Number: 1 to 1 1/2 hours, 20-25 participants. Allow enough time for each group member to contribute to the discussion.

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Activity #2: Handout

The Family of Origin Pattern

A frequent response to single parenthood by the single parent is:

Reunification with family of origin:
- a. through a physical move
- b. through a psychological reunion

Characteristics of Family of Origin Relationships

1. Relatively small - family members who live close are involved
2. Frequent interaction
3. A few provide nearly all support
4. Sex "roles" of family members are still in place (Males: financial and household repair assistance; Females: child care and personal problem assistance)
5. Cultural norms underlie (obligations are strong basis)
6. Reciprocity exists but usually generated by parent rather than by child
7. Reciprocity obligation strengthened: the single parent reinforced to provide similar support to her own and others in same family

Generally Provided by Family of Origin Relationships

1. Direct services

   Child care, financial, household repair and maintenance

2. Emotional services

   Security, reassurance, sense of personal worth, time to overcome vulnerability of singleness

Potential Limitations of Family of Origin Relationships

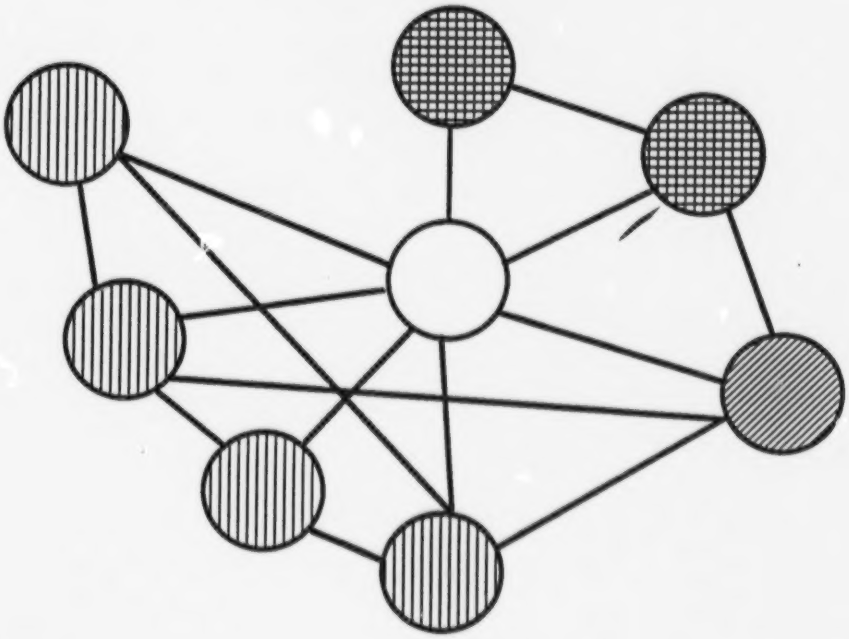
1. Tend to be "one-way" out of obligations
2. Provide limited opportunity for intimacy (mutual confiding)
3. Lead to isolation from community and social contacts
4. Creates temporary "self-worth" based on confidence as single parent but not as single person.

Related Activity: Draw a map of family of origin relationships:

1. Participant given small disks on which is written own name and family members' names
2. Disks are arranged (taped) on a large piece of paper
3. Lines are drawn between members to show interactions

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Networking
Activity #2
Example



○ Single Parent

▦ Children

▥ Relatives

▨ Friends

Thoughts for exploration:

1. Am I happy with contributions of self/others in this support group?
2. Do I need to extend my network? In what way?

Networking
Activity #3

Purpose:	To help participants gain understanding of both the positive and negative aspects of conjugal network support group networking pattern.
Title:	Looking at Conjugal Support Group Networking System
Activity:	Participants whose support persons include a spouse or live-in friend may wish to compare support services received from spouse/friend to those received from family of origin members. Lead participants in a discussion of the characteristics of the Conjugal Network characteristics (See Activity #3 handout).
Time and Group Number:	1 to 1 1/2 hours, 20-25 participants. Allow enough time for each group member to contribute to the discussion.

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Activity #3: Handout

The Conjugal Network Pattern

A way of responding to single parenthood by the single parent is:

The creation of the conjugal family form:
- a. Places a spouse-equivalent at the center (may be the person with whom the single-parent lives or is dating, or may be the ex-spouse)
- b. May include the relatives, neighbors, friends

Characteristics of Conjugal Relationships

1. Subtype A: Composed primarily of self, spouse/friend, relatives and old friends
   - a. Generally small and closely interacting with single-parent, among themselves and with the dominant center-figure
   - b. Resembles Family of Origin relationships
   - c. A few provide all the services
   - d. Relationships somewhat less durable than family of origin (separation or divorce)

2. Subtype B: Composed primarily or self, spouse/friend, and new friends.
   - a. Generally large and loosely knit with little interaction among members
   - b. Resembles Extended Family
   - c. Interactions provide distinct services
   - d. Relationships relatively more durable than the typical extended family relationships

3. In general, Subtypes A and B are involved in less frequent contact than either Family of Origin or Extended Family relationships - probably due to high level of interaction between the single parent and the spouse-equivalent. This network pattern involves a high level of reciprocity and balance.

Generally Provided by Conjugal Relationships

By both Subtypes:

1. Direct Services
   - a. neighbors and friends provide general services
   - b. key spouse-equivalent provides personal services

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

2. Emotional services
   a. Subtype A:
      Emotional support is dependent upon the spouse-equivalent and upon the belief that a one-on-one relationship is the critical factor for the single-parent.
   b. Subtype B:
      1. Emotional support is provided primarily by the key spouse-equivalent while security and reassurance of worth are occupation related.
      2. Some integration into community.

Potential Limitations of Conjugal Relationships

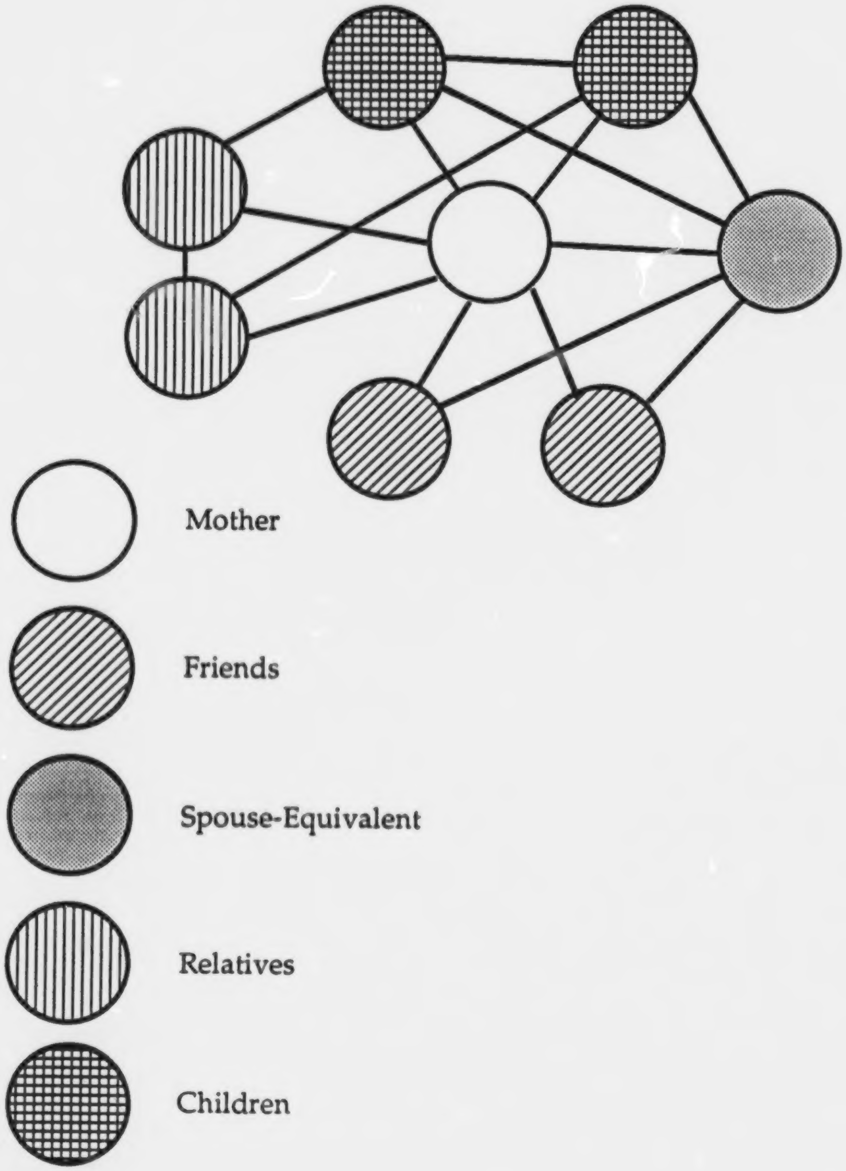
1. Subtype A:
   Isolation from community and social groups (not necessarily a limitation for those who do not see community and social groups as a substitute compensation for a spouse-equivalent).
2. Subtype B:
   Confusion and inconsistencies regarding use of extended network.

Related Activity: Draw a map of Conjugal relationships. See example on page entitled "Example - Subtype A."

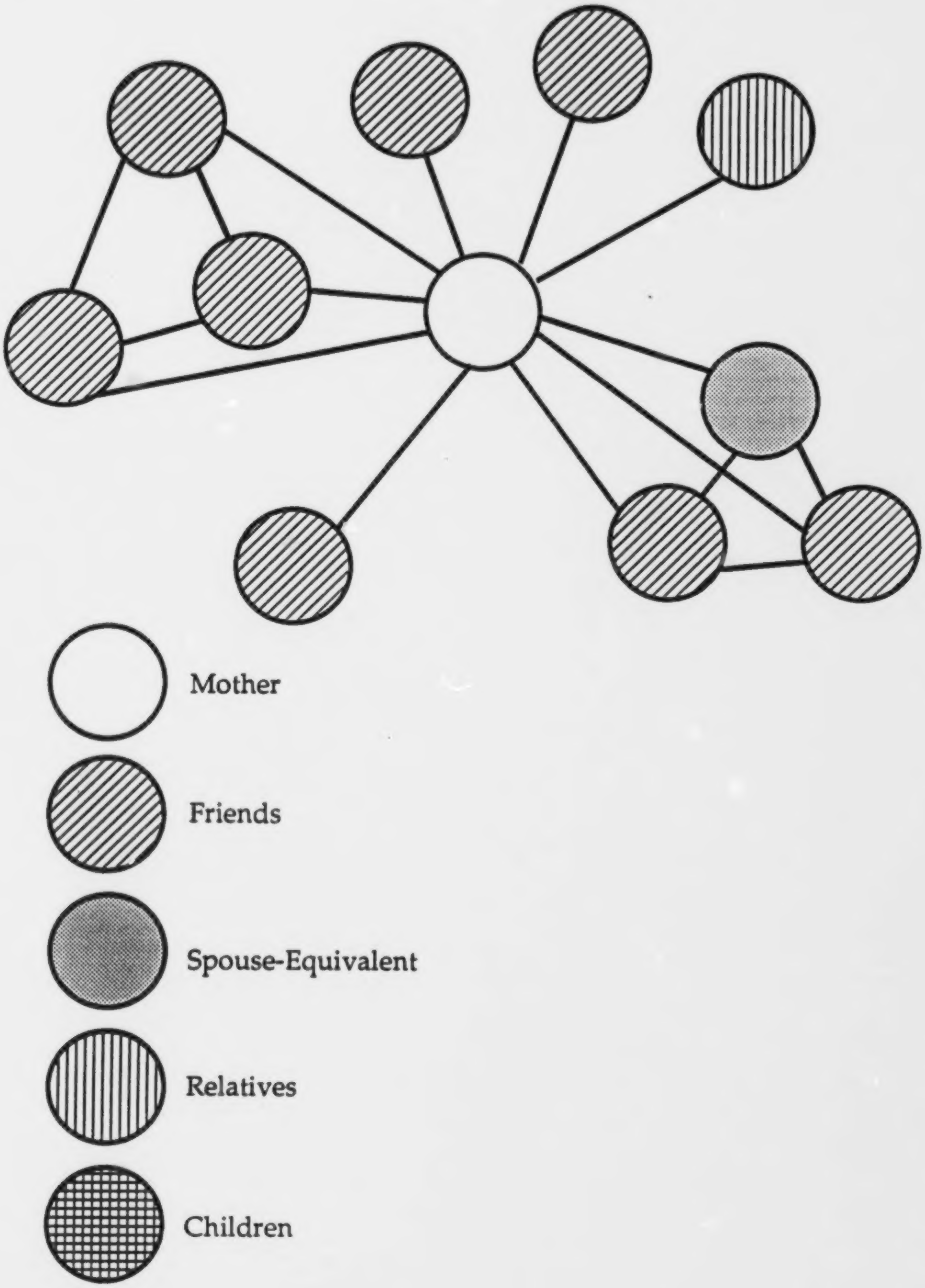
Networking

Activity #3

Example: Subtype A


Mother
Friends
Spouse-Equivalent
Relatives
Children

Networking
Activity #3
Example: Subtype B


Mother
Friends
Spouse-Equivalent
Relatives
Children

Networking
Activity #4

Purpose:	To help participants gain understanding of both the positive and negative aspects of the Extended Family Networking System.
Title:	Looking at the Loose-Knit Extended Family Networking System
Activity:	Lead participants to identify all component parts of an Extended Family Networking System (review "Characteristics of Networking" if needed). Use Handout #4 to help group members determine if this type of network is possible or necessary for them.
Time and Group Number:	1 to 1 1/2 hours, 20-25 participants. Allow enough time for each group member to contribute to the discussion.

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Activity #4: Handout

The Extended Network Pattern

A way of responding to single-parenthood by the single parent is:

Establishment of an extended network:
  a. May include relatives, ex-spouse, pre-divorce friends, etc.
  b. Usually includes new friends and other single parents
  c. Often includes groups, i.e. parent groups, community action groups, social activity groups, etc.

Characteristics of Extended Family Relationships

1. Usually quite large
2. Often clustered (reflecting groups)
3. Often considerable involvement within each group but not between or among groups
4. Interactions provide distinct services (car repairing, baby-sitting, personal advice)
5. Ad hoc relationships of less durability and intensity
6. Much sharing of commitment and experience

Generally Provided by Extended Family Relationships

1. Direct services

   Babysitting cooperatives, car pools, food co-ops, back-up services (not on sex role basis, but by areas of expertise and interest), group accessibility.

2. Emotional services

   Strong identification with role as single parent, encouragement to become more independent and motivated to identify with role other than single parent; reinforcement of giving-process as well as of receiving (including services but especially of a level of appropriate same-sex intimacy), encouragement to participate in community organizations and in active social lives.

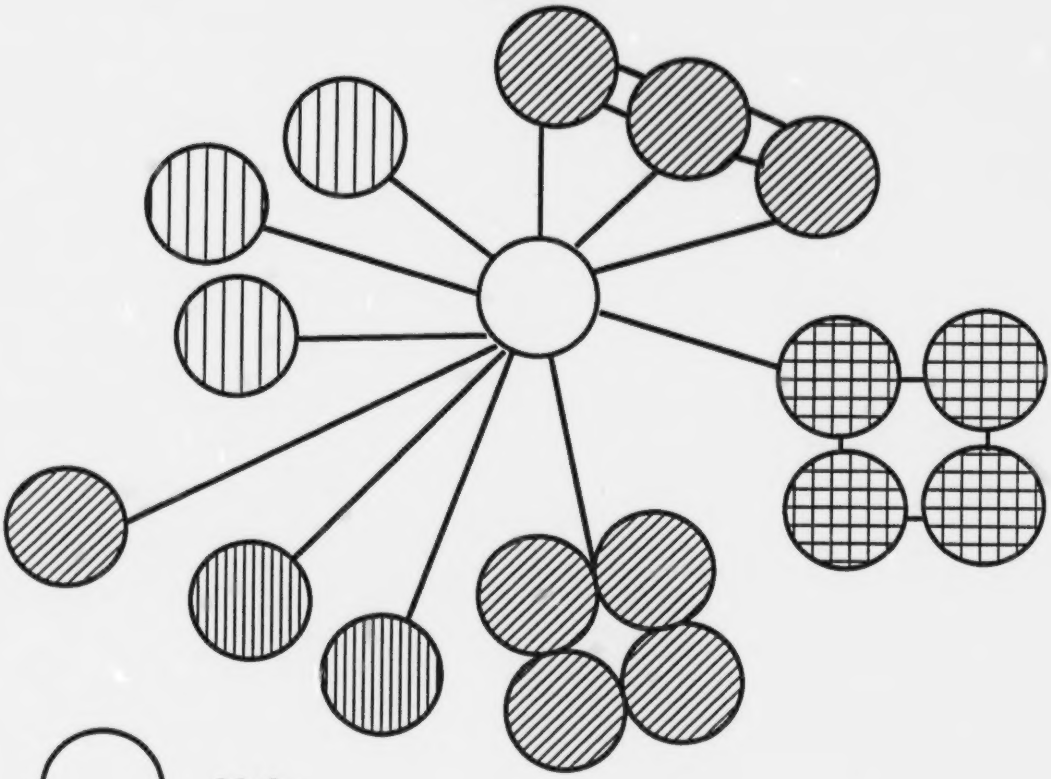
Potential Limitations of Extended Family Relationships

1. Often temporary and less dependable (little sense of obligation)
2. Members considerably mobile and transient (strong career orientation)
3. Often negative self-image and considerable distress (usually large networks and concentration on occupational success could be indicative of lack of security).

Related Activity: Draw a map of extended family relationships.

Reprinted by permission of the author. "The Single Parent and the Networking Process," a position paper by Bettie Tipton, Director of Equal Vocational Education Programs, Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education.

Networking
Activity #4
Example



○ Mother

▨ Friends

▥ Relatives

▥ Co-Workers

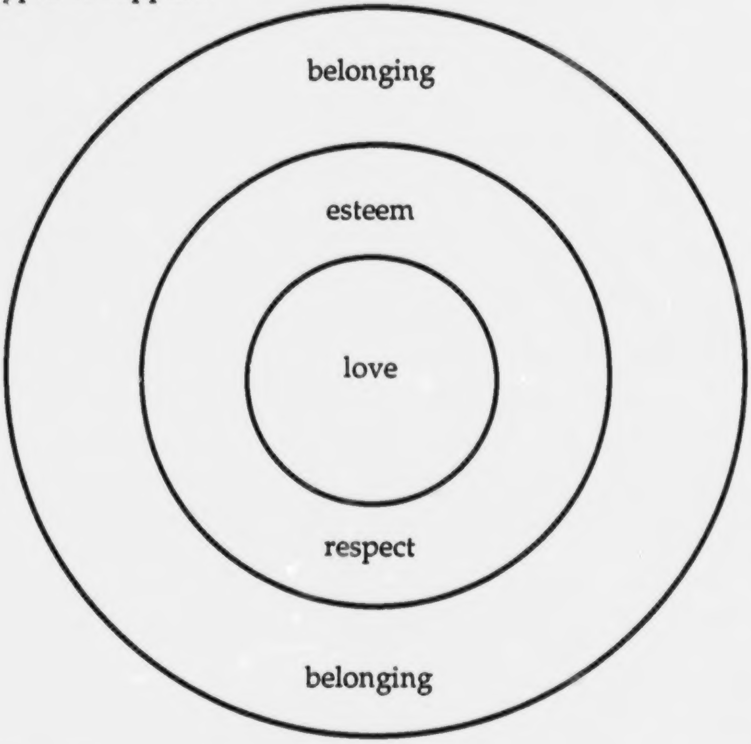
▦ Community Resources

Questions for Discussion:

1. Is this network type present/possible in my life? If no, what might I do to increase the possibility?
2. How might an extended networking pattern help the single parent overcome dependency?

My Social Support Network

Map out your social support network. Write in names of people, organizations, groups, etc., you feel are part of your social support network. Some may contribute to several types of support.



Love - I am cared for unconditionally for who I am.

Esteem - The way I am and what I do is valued and admired.

Respect - My values, beliefs and ideas are recognized and accepted, even if not always approved by individuals close to me.

Belonging - I feel a part of a group; we may not agree on everything, but we still feel close and supportive of each other.

Are some of your sources more focused on you as an employee rather than as a family member? Place a **W** by those sources. Place an **F** by those sources that support you in your home and family life. Check for balance and some sources that offer both.

Reprinted from *Balancing Work and Family*, 1985, Minnesota Technical College System, Extension and Customized Training Services.

Activity: Build a Support Network

Use the following Activity Sheet to help participants identify their current personal support networks.

Each "ray" of the sun identifies a type of relationship, such as parent, neighbor, teacher. Ask participants to name someone who fits that category and who is supportive of them in some way (financially, emotionally, spiritually).

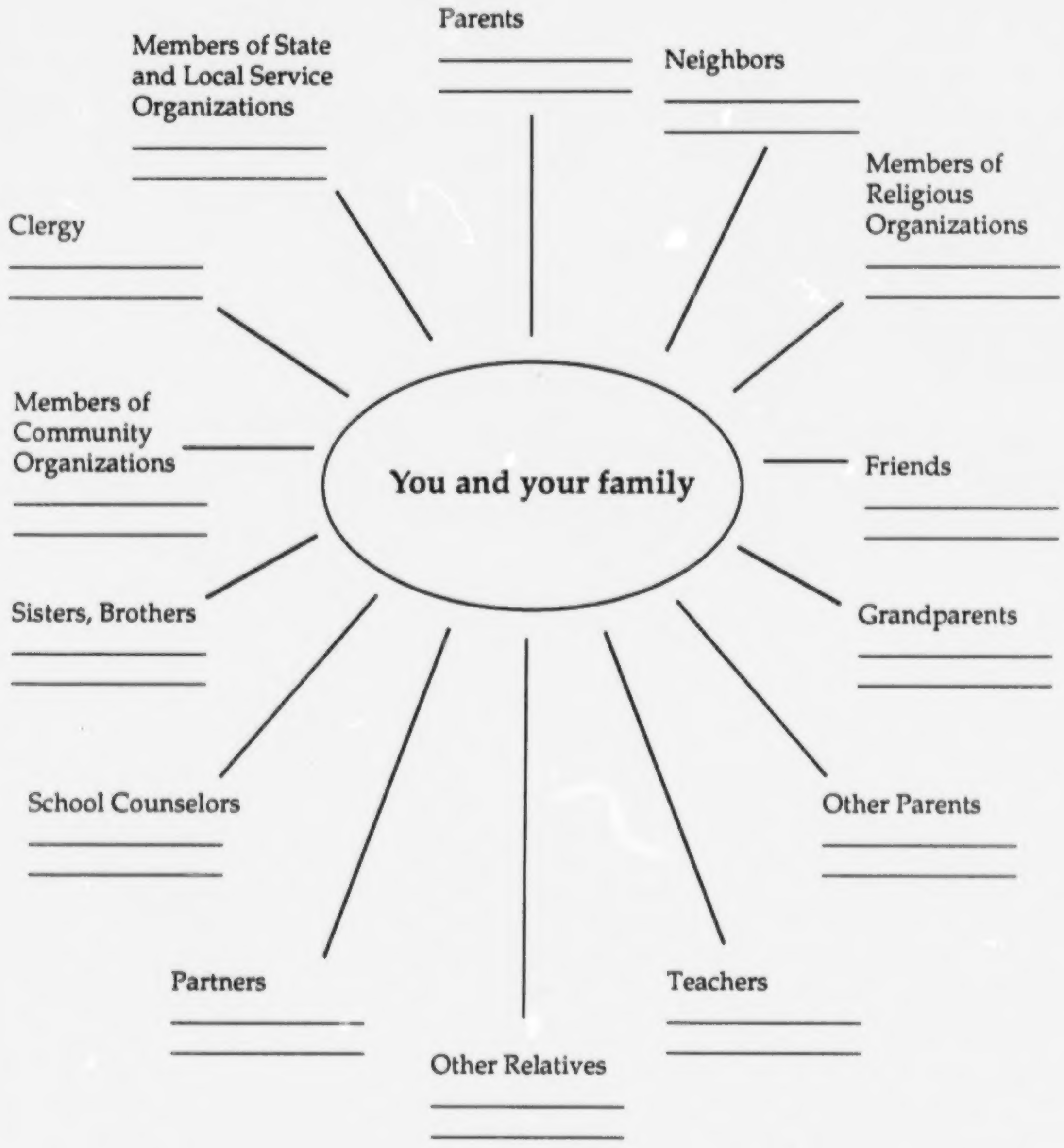
Two lines follow each relationship type. On the first line, write the name of the person. On the second line, write that person's phone number.

If any lines remain blank, participants might make it a goal to develop supportive relationships in those areas of their lives. Or, participants might fill in those lines with people from other categories.

Participants might want to hang their rays of sunshine in the kitchen, or some other visible place, to remind them daily that they know a lot of people who care about them.

Adapted from A. Frances Lindner, *Life Skills Workbook: A Guide to Personal Growth*, Madison, WI: Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1987.

Build a Support Network


Parents
Members of State and Local Service Organizations
Neighbors
Members of Religious Organizations
Clergy
Members of Community Organizations
You and your family
Friends
Sisters, Brothers
Grandparents
School Counselors
Other Parents
Partners
Teachers
Other Relatives

Adapted from A. Frances Lindner, *Life Skills Workbook: A Guide to Personal Growth*, Madison, WI: Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1987.

Child Care Checklist

WHAT IS QUALITY CHILD CARE?

That question has no easy, quick answers. To parents, evaluating child care may seem an overwhelming task, especially if you're new to child care services.

This checklist can help. Use it in whatever way best suits your needs. For a thorough evaluation, go through the entire checklist, section by section. Or, if you prefer, zero in on parts that seem most important to you.

CAREGIVERS

Some things to look for . . .

- ☐ Do the caregivers genuinely seem to enjoy working with young children?
- ☐ Do they seem to be warm, loving people?
- ☐ Do they talk with you, the parent, openly and straightforwardly about their policies?
- ☐ Do they have training and experience in child care?
- ☐ Do they receive regular, ongoing additional training related to their jobs?
- ☐ Do the caregivers seem to get along well with each other?

CAREGIVER/CHILD INTERACTIONS

- ☐ Do the caregivers get down to child's eye level when talking or listening to children?
- ☐ Do they encourage children to express their feelings verbally?
- ☐ Do they encourage children to work out negative feelings—anger, fear, frustration—without hurting others?
- ☐ Do caregivers respect individual differences among the children?

Reprinted from "Child Care Checklist," Division of Community Services, Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services, Madison, Wisconsin.

☐ Do disciplinary measures focus on what the child is to do, rather than what not to do?

☐ Do caregivers set reasonable limits with children and also allow children to make choices when appropriate?

☐ Do they discipline with words, tone of voice and actions that show respect for children? (State licensing rules prohibit corporal punishment and any humiliating, frightening or abusive punishment.)

☐ Do caregivers show patience in letting children do something for themselves and exert their independence?

☐ Do the children seem comfortable in coming up to talk to the caregivers?

☐ Do the children seem happily occupied and relaxed?

☐ Does the ratio of children to caregivers meet state requirements as outlined below?

GROUP DAY CARE CENTERS (licensed to care for 9 or more children)

Age of Children (yrs)	Child:Staff Ratio*	Maximum Group Size
0-2	4:1	8
2-2 1/2	6:1	12
2 1/2-3	8:1	16
3-4	10:1	20
4-5	13:1	24
5-6	17:1	32
6 & up	18:1	32

*These ratios are adjusted for mixed age groups.

FAMILY DAY CARE CENTERS (licensed to care for 4-8 children)

A family child care provider can care for no more than 8 children, including his or her own. Age groups may be mixed, according to the following combinations. Additional allowed numbers of school-aged children are shown in parentheses.

Children Under 2 Years		Children 2 to 7 Years	Maximum Group Size
0	+	8	8
1	+	7	8
2	+	5	7 (+1)
3	+	2	5 (+3)
4	+	0	4 (+2)

A WORD ON WISCONSIN CHILD CARE REGULATIONS

Anyone caring for 4 or more children under the age of 7 must be licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services. Exceptions are relatives caring for your children or babysitters who come into your home.

Licensed programs fall into three categories:
- group day care centers—9 or more children
- family day care centers—4 to 8 children
- day camps

Regulations set standards for adequate child care, but cannot guarantee quality care. That's why parent involvement in evaluating child care is so crucial.

PROGRAM/ACTIVITIES

☐ Is there a regular daily schedule? Is it organized, without being rigid?

☐ Are activities geared for different age and developmental levels?

☐ Are there both indoor and outdoor activities?

☐ Is time provided for both physical activity and rest play?

☐ Is there a nap or rest period?

☐ Are there structured activities, as well as free play when children can choose what to do?

☐ Are there opportunities for different types of interactions -- large group play, playing with a few other children, playing alone? Are there materials for:

☐ dramatic play—dolls, puppets, dress-up clothes?

☐ language skills—reading books, activity books, a reading corner?

☐ creative movement and music—records, instruments, dance props?

☐ gross motor exercise—climbing structures, riding toys, tumbling mats?

☐ fine motor exercise—puzzles, sorting boxes, pegboards?

☐ art materials—crayons, paints, scissors, clay?

☐ sand and water play?

- ☐ Are there living plants and animals for children to observe and care for?
- ☐ Are the children occasionally taken out into the community for activities—parks, libraries, museums, field trips?
- ☐ When the children are transported, are seat belts or age-appropriate car seats used?
- ☐ Do the children have opportunities to learn about sharing and getting along with others?
- ☐ Are there opportunities to learn about the child's own and other's cultures and to learn respect for people of different ages, races, cultures and abilities?

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ Are the play areas clean and large enough so children can move freely and safely, without activities interfering with each other?
- ☐ Is the playground safe and supervised by an adult so that children can't wander away?
- ☐ Is play equipment (indoor and outdoor) sturdy and in good repair?
- ☐ Are games, toys, etc., stored where the children can get to them?
- ☐ Are wall displays at child's eye level?
- ☐ Are unused electrical sockets covered with safety caps?
- ☐ Are cleaning fluids, medications, poisons, sharp tools, matches, etc., stored away from children?
- ☐ Is the center or home free of other hazards: peeling paint, exposed electrical wires, uncovered hot water pipes, unprotected hot radiators or heaters?
- ☐ Is there an emergency evacuation plan posted, and are fire safety drills practiced?
- ☐ Are emergency telephone numbers posted by the telephones?
- ☐ Is there adequate heat, ventilation and lighting?
- ☐ Are bathrooms clean and sanitary?
- ☐ Are there footstools in the bathrooms to help young children reach toilets and sinks?

MEALS AND SNACKS

☐ Are meals and snacks balanced and wholesome?

☐ Do the staff and children wash hands before eating and preparing meals?

☐ Is the food preparation area clean and sanitary?

☐ Are menus posted in advance?

☐ Does mealtime seem enjoyable, relaxed and unhurried?

☐ Do the staff members sit with the children at the tables?

EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPECIAL AGE GROUPS

Infants and Toddlers

☐ Do the caregivers provide enough cuddling, holding and attention?

☐ Do they spend time playing with and talking to the baby?

☐ Do they provide stimulation by naming things and pointing out things to look at and touch?

☐ Is the physical setting baby-proofed—gates on stairways, caps on electrical outlets, etc.?

☐ Is there a safe place to sleep where the child can't roll out and be injured?

School-Age Children

☐ Are activities varied, with recreational activities, rest and quiet areas, and freedom for children to select activities?

☐ Are activities provided that will be interesting for this age level, rather than just an extension of day care activities?

☐ Are staff able to understand and cope with the conflicts and confusions that come up with older children?

☐ Is there a place to do homework?

☐ Will the children be accompanied by an adult from school to the child care center?

GENERAL THINGS TO LOOK FOR

☐ Is the license posted?

☐ Are the parents' visits, announced or unannounced, welcome anytime?

☐ Are there opportunities for parent/caregiver communication?

☐ Is this the kind of place you would enjoy spending your day?

IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

First, talk to your child's caregiver to try to work out your differences. If those attempts fail, and you feel the caregiver is violating a state licensing regulation, contact your regional Division of Community Services office.

Choosing Child Day Care

Directions: When you as a parent entrust the care of your child to another person, you are making an important decision. Take your time in choosing a program. Visit, ask questions and carefully compare several programs. Care may be in a private home (family day care) or in a larger building (day care center). Your choice depends on what you want and need for your child.

A Mini-Checklist

Here are some things to consider . . .

THE CAREGIVER

☐ Is warm, friendly, supportive

☐ Treats each child as a special person

☐ Has training and experience working with children

☐ Respects and accepts different cultural values

☐ Listens to children; talks with them

THE HOME OR CENTER

☐ Pleasant, clean, comfortable

☐ Space for active and quiet play

☐ Enough heat, light, ventilation

☐ Licensed or certified

☐ Fenced outdoor play area

☐ A place I'd like my child to be

Reprinted from "Choosing Child Day Care," Division of Community Services, Department of Health and Social Services, Madison, Wisconsin.

THE PROGRAM

TIME PLANNED FOR . . .

☐ Active and quiet play
☐ Indoor and outdoor play
☐ Snacks and meals
☐ Naps or rest time
☐ Trips, excursions, special activities
☐ Artistic or musical expression
☐ Reading or story telling

CHILD CARING APPROACH

☐ Agrees with my own
☐ Encourages children to express themselves
☐ Encourages self-help and independence
☐ Helps angry or fearful children work out their feelings
☐ Reduces natural problems and conflicts of children

FOR EACH CHILD

OPPORTUNITIES TO . . .

☐ Learn to get along, to share, to respect differences
☐ Learn about own and other's cultures, ethnic backgrounds
☐ Speak both English and your family's native language
☐ Develop talents; feel good about himself/herself

HEALTH AND SAFETY

☐ Poisons, sharp objects stored or out of reach
☐ Free of hazards
☐ First aid kit available
☐ Equipment safe, in good repair
☐ Emergency numbers posted
☐ Good health habits encouraged

TOYS AND EQUIPMENT

☐ Clay, paint, books, puzzles, records, games
☐ Wheel toys: wagons, tricycles
☐ Props for dramatic play
☐ Natural materials: plants, animals, rocks
☐ Climbing apparatus
☐ Musical instruments

FAMILY SUPPORT

☐ Encourages parent participation
☐ Provides information about young children
☐ Provides time for parent conferences
☐ Uses community resources

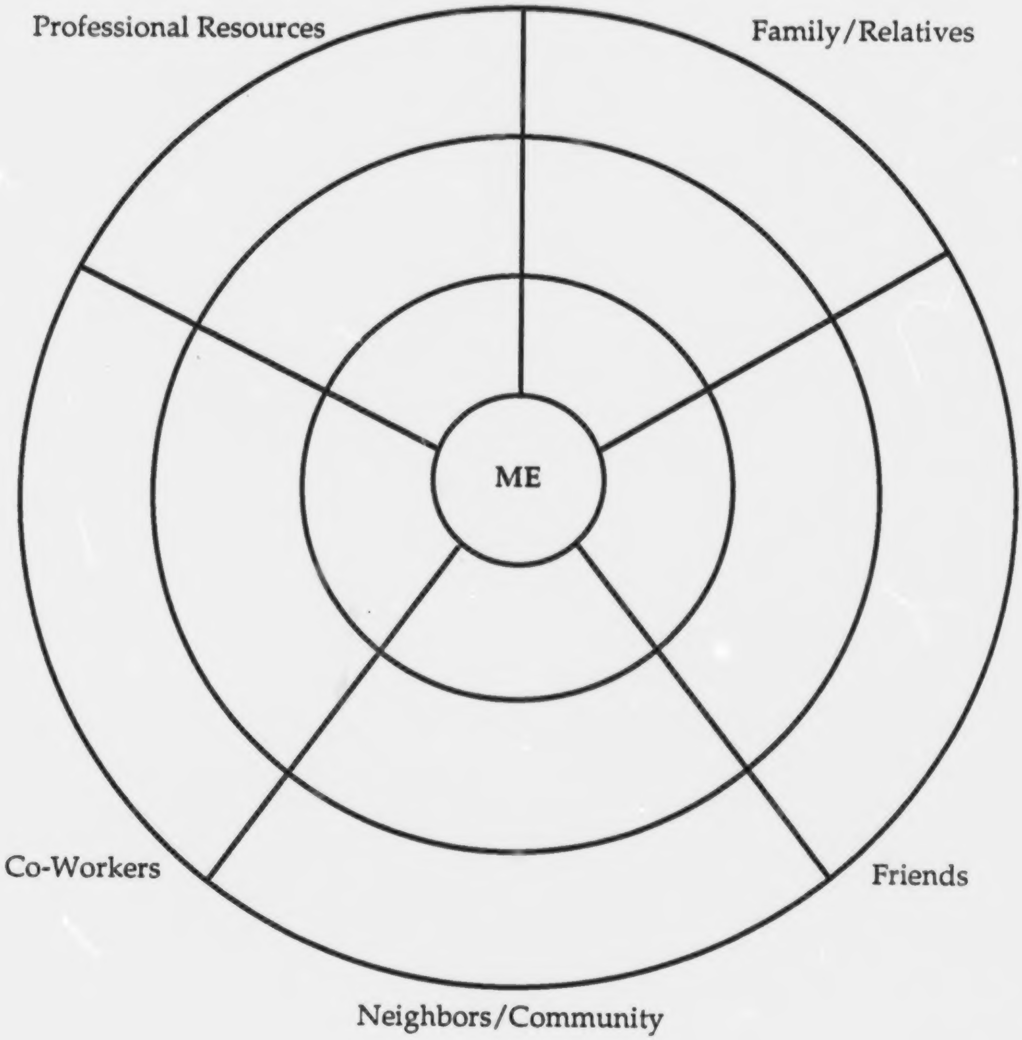
As a parent . . .

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

- ☐ Tell the caregiver about your child's special needs, fears, physical problems
- ☐ Leave phone numbers where you or another responsible adult can be reached
- ☐ Drop in now and then
- ☐ Arrange for regular conferences
- ☐ Ask questions when you have concerns

Network Map

Directions: Plot on the network map your current support system. Identify by initials family members, friends, childcare providers, libraries, attornies, counselors, etc. . . . Those who are more helpful should be plotted closer to the center circle, those least helpful should be depicted further out or outside the circles. The graph may help you take inventory of your current resources and/or identify areas which could be further explored and developed.


Professional Resources
Family/Relatives
ME
Co-Workers
Friends
Neighbors/Community

Reprinted by permission of Karen Showers, Blackhawk Technical College, Janesville, Wisconsin.

Competency 13.0

Skills to nurture other family members and friends

13.01 Describe nurturing.
13.02 Identify personal positive and negative aspects of own nurturance.
13.03 Demonstrate positive nurturing skills.
13.04 Identify community resources for nurturing family members and friends.

Competency 13.0
Overview

Women have traditionally been identified as "nurturers" in their roles as wives and mothers, as well as in the workplace in such jobs as nursing or child care. It would seem that for women, nurturing others is simply second nature. But the ways in which women nurture are not always beneficial, both to those that women nurture and to women themselves. Often, women nurture others to the extent that they forget to nurture themselves. Other times, women who are single parents may find their nurturing skills pushed to the limit because of the many pressures they face. For these reasons, examining, evaluating and developing nurturing skills are important parts of self-development.

Competency 13.0 helps participants explore their patterns of nurturing and assists them in improving these patterns. Participants completing Competency 13.0: Skills to Nurture Other Family Member and Friends will be able to:

13.01 Describe nurturing
13.02 Identify personal positive and negative aspects of own nurturance
13.03 Demonstrate positive nurturing skills
13.04 Identify community resources for nurturing family members and friends

Indicator 13.01 includes a look at family nurturing routines and communication methods. In Indicator 13.02, instructors are encouraged to facilitate a discussion on the positive and negative aspects of participants' nurturing habits. Indicator 13.03 describes positive means of nurturing, specifically addressing situations involving single and/or divorced parents. Indicator 13.04 gives instructors the opportunity to inform participants of available community resources.

Competency 13.0: Skills to nurture other family members and friends

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
13.01 Describe nurturing	Lecture	*Establishing Nurturing Routines*
	Lecture	*I Statements and You Messages*
13.02 Identify personal positive and negative aspects of own nurturance	Discussion	
13.03 Demonstrate positive nurturing skills	Lecture	*Meeting Your Child's Needs*
	Discussion	*The Single Parent*
	Discussion	*When Daddy Is Gone*
	Lecture	*Parenting After the Smoke Clears: How To End the Fighting*
	Lecture; discussion	*Through a Child's Eyes: How to Help the Youngster Cope*
	Lecture	*Discipline With Love*
	Lecture	*Helping Families Overcome the "If Onlys"*
	Discussion	*Pause: Take a Moment*
	Discussion	*As Your Child Grows*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
13.03 (continued)	Discussion	*Taking Care of Yourself*
13.04 Identify community resources for nurturing family members and friends	Discussion	*Instructor may choose to invite guest speakers from the community*

Resources

A parent's guide to day care. (1980). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Publication No. (OHDS) 80-30270.

Allen, Juliet V. (1983). What do I do when . . . . San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers.

Ashery, Rebecca S. and Basen, Michele M. (1983). The parents with careers workbook. Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, Ltd.

Atlas, Stephen L. (1984). The parents without partners sourcebook. Philadelphia, PA: Running Press.

Berne, Patricia H. (1985). Building self-esteem in children. New York: Continuum.

Bettelheim, Bruno. (1987). A good enough parent: A book on child-rearing. New York: Knopf.

Boston Women's Health Book Collective. (1978). Ourselves and our children: A book by and for parents. New York: Random House.

"Childcare delivery system," Parents in the workplace report #5. (1982). St. Paul, MN: Toys 'n Things and Resource Center.

Choosing childcare: A parent's guide. (1982). Minneapolis, MN: Childcare Resource Center.

Clarke, Jean I. (1978). Self-esteem: A family affair. Minneapolis, MN: Winston Press, Inc.

Dail, Paula W. "Who will mind the child? A dilemma for many employed parents," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 74, No. 1, Spring, 1982.

Dodson, Fitzhugh. (1986). Your child: Birth to age 6. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Family Service Association of America. (1980). Aging parents: Whose responsibility? New York: Family Service Association of America.

Head Start Child Development Corporation. (n/d). Single mother's resource handbook. Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center.

"How to choose a day care home." Minneapolis, MN: Hennepin County Family Day Care Program.

Kammerman, Sheila. (1980). Parenting in an unresponsive society: Managing work and family life. New York: The Free Press.

Long, Lynette and Thomas. "The unspoken fears of latchkey kids," Working Mothers, Vol. V., No. 5, May, 1982.

"Looking at care for your child: Parent questions and rights." Minneapolis, MN: Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association.

Miller, Jo Ann. (1986). The parents' guide to daycare. New York: Bantam Books.

Prutzman, Pricilla, et al. (1988). The friendly classroom for a small planet: A handbook on creative approaches to living and problem solving for children. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publications.

Establishing Nurturing Routines

A routine is a consistent way of doing things. Routines are usually established by parents to manage their own behavior, and the behavior of their children. Some family routines may be cleaning the home on Saturday mornings, doing laundry on Wednesday evenings, saying grace at the dinner table, etc.

A nurturing routine is a consistent way of doing things that promotes a child's self-concept and self-esteem. Nurturing routines are established by parents to reinforce the positive overall growth of their children. Nurturing routines tell kids that the way to do things in our family helps everyone feel good about themselves. And feeling good about yourself is very important for acting appropriately and doing good things.

Nurturing Routines Help Establish Consistency

Children feel secure when they know what to expect. The security they feel allows them to learn to trust people important to them, like their mother and father. From trusting parents comes the natural response of being able to trust others.

Nurturing Routines Help Establish a Positive Self-Esteem and Positive Self-Concept

Positive feelings toward oneself and positive thoughts about oneself are two important personality traits which emerge from nurturing routines. Without positive feelings and thoughts about oneself, there is little chance that the child will treat others with respect and kindness. Since he thinks and feels badly about himself, it's likely that he will feel and think badly about others. Nurturing routines help develop in the child a positive regard for self which ultimately leads to positive regard for others.

Reprinted from Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D. and Juliana Dellinger Bavolek, MSE, *Nurturing Program—for Parents and Children, Birth to Five Years: Parent Handbook* by permission of Family Development Resources, Park City, Utah.

Nurturing Routines Help Establish Empathy

Doing something consistently, and doing it with concern for a child's self-concept and self-esteem, helps the child develop a sense of trust. Children learn that adults are people who care for them and help them to get their needs met. This feeling of trust leads to feelings of caring for others as the child continues to mature. Empathy, the awareness of the needs of others, is a primary and necessary characteristic of nurturing parents and children.

Important Ingredients in Nurturing Routines

Nurturing routines consist of:

- Gentle, positive touch: hugs, kisses, tickles, massages.
- Praise for being and doing: "Mommy really loves you" (being); "What a good listener you are" (doing).
- Happy, pleasant expressions and tone of voice: smiles, light cheerful voice.
- Caring, empathetic caregivers: being aware of the needs of children.
- Fun: games, finger plays, songs, dance.
- Consistency: being predictable.

Types of Nurturing Routines

Nurturing routines can best be established in the following areas of parent-child interactions:

- Diapering and Dressing Time
- Feeding Time
- Bath Time
- Bedtime

When is it Best to Begin Nurturing Routines?

Parents should begin to establish nurturing routines the moment they bring their baby home. Starting early is the best way to establish consistent, caring and loving parent-child interactions.

Important Ingredients in Nurturing Routines

- Gentle, positive touch
- Praise for being and doing
- Happy, pleasant expressions and tone of voice
- Caring, empathetic caregivers
- Fun
- Consistency

Reprinted from Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D. and Juliana Dellinger Bavolek, MSE, *Nurturing Program—for Parents and Children, Birth to Five Years: Parent Handbook* by permission of Family Development Resources, Park City, Utah.

I Statements and You Messages

I statements are expressions about me. These expressions can focus on how I feel, on what I need, or about what I think. For example, I statements about how I feel may be: I feel angry; I feel excited; I feel depressed. I statements about what I need may be: I need a hug; I need a glass of water; I need some quiet time. I statements about what I think could be: I think I will not go; I think I am lost; I think the team should trade for a good quarterback.

You messages are about someone else. They are your perceptions of how someone else feels, about what someone else thinks. Some examples of you messages regarding someone else's feelings could be: You look angry; You seem excited; You appear depressed. You messages regarding someone's needs could be: You need a hug; You need a glass of water; You need some quiet time. You messages regarding someone's thoughts could be: What do you think about nuclear energy? Do you think the team should trade for a good quarterback?

I Statements and You Messages

I statements make me the center of attention, the star of the moment. I statements focus on me, tell about me, describe me.

You messages make someone else the center of attention, the star of the moment. You messages focus on someone else, tell about someone else, describe someone else. The big difference is that messages about someone else are only guesses or perceptions about how they look, how they feel, and what they need. Only that person knows for sure if the you messages are accurate.

Reprinted from Stephen J. Bavolek, Ph.D. and Juliana Dellinger Bavolek, MSE, *Nurturing Program—for Parents and Children, Birth to Five Years: Parent Handbook* by permission of Family Development Resources, Park City, Utah.

Ownership of Feelings

Another difference between I statements and you messages centers on ownership. When used appropriately, I statements convey ownership of feelings, thoughts, and needs. Each person is responsible for his or her self.

That is, no one can make you feel, think or need something you don't want. Although others can influence your decision, the final say belongs to you and no one else.

When other people use I statements, they are essentially taking ownership of what they feel, think, or need. Taking ownership of your own feelings, thoughts, and needs is the first step in using I statements appropriately.

Ownership of feelings cannot be expressed with you messages simply because no one can own anyone else's feelings, thoughts, and needs. Ownership is a highly individualistic concept.

Appropriate Use of I Statements

I statements are used appropriately when a person wants to send some message about him or herself. As we just mentioned, such statements convey ownership and represent a clear statement of the person's feelings, thoughts, and needs.

- "I am angry with you because you started a fight with Billie."
- "I am not aware of any restaurant open this time of night."
- "I need to spend some time by myself in order to unwind."

Inappropriate Use of I Statements

I statements are often used inappropriately. Sometimes people make I statements in order to manipulate others into doing something. Some examples of the inappropriate use of I statements may be:

- "I am so upset at what you are doing that I might have a heart attack."
- "If you don't do it my way, I will get a migraine headache."

These statements are manipulative. Their intent is to control someone else's behavior. The clear message and the ownership of the feeling is not present.

Appropriate Use of You Messages

You messages are used appropriately in three ways.

To Give Choices

You messages work well in combination with choices and consequences: A message is being sent to the child which describes alternative plans of behavior and their expected consequences.

An example may be:

> "Stephen, you have a choice. You can clean your room now, or you can clean your room later. However, if your room is not cleaned by 6 p.m., you can't watch T.V. tonight. It's your choice."

In this instance, a you message was sent to Stephen, and Stephen was the center of attention. As you already know, giving children choices helps them develop a sense of responsibility.

To Give Praise

You messages work well when praising someone for being or for doing. When praising, the center of attention naturally belongs to someone else. That's the time for a whole string of you messages.

- "You must feel very proud."
- "You must feel really good."
- "You have done that so well."

Letting someone know how proud you are would be good also, as long as the center of attention remains with the other person.

To Gain Clarification

You messages are ideal to send when clarification is desired. As mentioned earlier, you messages are your perceptions or guesses about how another person feels, what another person is thinking, or what another person needs. When a you message is sent requesting clarification, we are essentially asking for validation. Are my perceptions right or wrong?

Some examples are:

- "You seem to be really angry."
- "You appear sad."
- "You don't seem to like the play."

The receiver is able to respond to the question(s) based on a quick inventory of how he is feeling. Sending a you message for clarification helps the sender know the state of being of the receiver, as well as letting the receiver know how he appears to be acting.

Inappropriate Use of You Messages

No one likes to have negative or bad feelings. It doesn't feel good to be angry, sad, afraid, depressed, or out of control, although all people have these feelings at some time or another during their lives. When we do have negative feelings, it's often difficult to take full responsibility for the feelings. It's easier and much safer to blame someone else for the way we feel. In that way, we don't have to take responsibility for our actions.

Statements like: "You made me angry;" "You give me a headache;" or "You made me lose control" are good examples of you messages that are blaming. They are the adult version of the child's "He made me do it."

Increasing Family Communication

The appropriate use of I statements and you messages is critical to establishing and enhancing communication among family members. The ability to accept and receive praise, to implement nonabusive behavior management strategies, to listen to the needs, feelings, and thoughts of your children, and to communicate your own feelings, thoughts, and needs all centers around your success at using I statements and you messages. The time and energy you invest in learning how to send I statements and you messages will pay rich dividends in increasing honest communication between you and your children, mate, and friends.

Meeting Your Child's Needs

If there's one thing that June Cleaver did well, it was meeting the needs of her children. That perfect role model is one that most of the Baby Boomer generation grew up with and is perhaps the reason why, when coupled with the feminist movement, a new character was introduced to our society: Super Mom. Almost every working mother has been faced with trying to live up to June Cleaver's image and to be the ultimate career woman at the same time. It's not possible.

Interestingly, fathers have not been faced with that problem. No one ever uses the term Super Dad. That's probably because society has allowed men to escape the guilt of being both a father and a career man. At our house we have a refrigerator magnet that says, "Why doesn't anyone ever ask a man how he can have a family and a career?"

Meeting your child's needs while working is basically a balancing act. It requires you to:

- Set priorities.
- Divide up responsibilities of parenting.
- Put your family and career in perspective.
- Communicate with your spouse and work together.

If you are an idealist, you will probably have more trouble because you hold high standards for yourself. You do not have to cut back on your standards, but you may need to cut back on the number of items you have standards for. You may be able to only keep a clean house while ignoring the sheets and pillowcases you would like to iron. Choose carefully what you want to be perfect, as you will not have time to do everything perfectly.

Building Self-Esteem

Every parent's goal is to have well-rounded children who are able to cope with the world and

Reprinted from Jim Dugger, *Parenting: Ward and June Don't Live Here Anymore* by permission of National Press Publications, Shawnee Mission, Kansas.

eventually make it on their own. However, how does one do this? Each child is different in personality and temperament. At first it may seem impossible, but it is not. Building a child's self-esteem is basically the result of an attitude that the parents have toward the child.

- Treat your children with dignity and respect. Don't ridicule or embarrass them.
- Remember that every child has self-worth. Don't tear away his or her worth by making him or her dependent on you.
- Love your child, even when he or she is being unlovable.
- Give your child a chance for independence at each age.
- Offer positive reinforcement to your child for the good things that he or she does.

This attitude will foster maturity appropriate for the age of your child. One of the hardest things about being a parent is that you have to grow up. If you are used to having temper tantrums and continue to do so as a parent, don't be surprised when your child has them also. The best parents are role models for their children.

Self-Esteem Techniques for Different Ages

1. **Infants:** With infants the vast majority of self-esteem building comes from giving them a consistent level of security and love.
2. **Toddlers:** The toddler's world is one of discovery, which can be both exciting and frightening. The self-esteem of toddlers can be undermined if every time they stumble or are scared, you reinforce their fright. This is not to say you should ignore them, but if you are overly responsive, they soon learn that the world is a scary and a hurtful place, thus

lowering their self-esteem. This is a time when children naturally suffer from separation anxiety. They need to know you are there, but should not be made to feel they can't function without you. It is natural for toddlers to explore the world and start to break away. Set limits that they understand.

3. **Preschoolers:** Once in preschool, building a child's self-esteem becomes the responsibility of the parents and the teacher. If you see your child coming home less confident than he or she previously was, talk to the teacher. The child is going through a new experience (school), so a certain amount of concern by the child is natural. If you have already supplied your child with self-esteem, this momentary lapse if natural. Try to put yourself in your child's shoes. How would you react to the situation?

4. **Elementary-age children:** Your child has now entered a world where his or her self-esteem will be tested daily. Each day the elementary-age child is asked to learn new material, try new ideas, experience new concepts. At this point in your life as a parent you become a coach and cheerleader, encouraging your children, giving them pep talks, showing them that you believe in their abilities. Keeping communication lines open is important at this age.

5. **Preadolescents:** By now school is routine and, although not every child loves school, most have learned the system and how to tolerate it. Self-esteem problems for the preadolescent usually deal with the opposite sex and peer pressure. Once again, the best you can do to help the preadolescent's self-esteem is to keep communication lines open and be an active listener. At this point in your child's life, he or she needs a safe haven for all the emotional and social storms he or she will be going through.

6. **Adolescence:** Just like the kindergartener, the adolescent is faced with a new world when he or she heads out to junior high school or high school. He or she is faced once again with new routines, new situations and increased expectations. To help your adolescent's self-esteem, you need to once again be a coach and cheerleader.

During each stage of your child's life, the emphasis on how to help your child maintain and increase self-esteem may vary. However, your basic attitude toward your child should not. If the child senses that you don't think he or she can do it (whatever it is), then your child will lose self-esteem. Be aware of how you communicate both verbally and nonverbally with your children.

Helping Your Child Grow

Most of you are aware of the various stages of physical growth your children go through. You can't help but be aware because every time you turn around, they've outgrown their clothes again. But are you aware that your child grows in *five* different ways?

Areas of growth:

1. Physical.
2. Emotional.
3. Mental.
4. Social.
5. Spiritual.

Helping Your Child Grow Physically

You can help your child grow by providing him or her with:

- Healthy, nutritional meals.
- Exercise.
- Rest.
- Routine health checkups.
- Preventative health care.

Helping Your Child Grow Emotionally

The emotional life of your child is interrelated with his or her self-esteem. An emotionally healthy child is a well-balanced child, able to cope with problems, use resources and act independently. You can help your child grow emotionally by:

- Treating your child with dignity and respect.
- Fostering independence.
- Loving your child.
- Helping your child find solutions for problems, not solving his or her problems for him or her.
- Helping your child meet crisis situations in a calm manner.

That's a big order, isn't it? Naturally, it's easier if you have matured emotionally.

Helping Your Child Grow Mentally

There are numerous books on the market that tell you how to teach your preschooler and even your infant how to read. Children are being expected to perform at higher levels educationally than ever before. Within the home you can help your child grow mentally by:

- Fostering a spirit of inquiry and curiosity.
- Encouraging reading and writing.
- Encouraging your children to question their universe.
- Providing reference materials in the home so homework can be done efficiently.
- Playing games that expand the mind.

Like self-esteem, mental growth is an attitude, one that doesn't need extensive resources. Every one of us knows a child whose parents pooh-poohed education, but overcame this to become a college professor or other intellectual achiever. For every one of those who have escaped a home that is a mental wasteland, there are 100 such achievers whose parents fostered their mental growth.

Helping Your Child Grow Socially

Our society helps us with this one because many of our social customs and institutions are built around what is socially normal.

- At age 3 Johnny enters preschool.
- At age 5 or 6 Susie enters school.
- At age 8 Mary takes her first communion.
- At age 13 Jacob has his bar mitzvah.
- At age 16 Susie is sweet 16 and never been kissed.

As in other areas of growth, you will be better prepared for what is normal socially with your second child than your first, and with your third child than your second. If you are unsure what your community's standards are, ask around. This does not mean that your daughter has to start dating at age 12 if the majority of her classmates are. But at least you will know what peer pressures you are operating against. To help your child grow socially:

- Encourage appropriate social interaction for your child's age.
- Encourage your child to have friends.
- Be aware of what is socially acceptable for your child's age group in your community.
- Take your child's personality into consideration. Not all children will be ready to socialize at the same time.
- Discuss with your child what is and is not socially acceptable for his or her age.
- Foster independence.

Helping Your Child Grow Spiritually

Many parents are totally unaware or very uncomfortable when it comes to helping their children grow spiritually. A child's spiritual growth is helping the child understand his or her place in the grand scheme of things. For many parents, this means belonging to an organized religion. For others it is showing a deep reverence for life. While for others it is answering the child's questions about life in a matter-of-fact manner. For most children, spiritual awareness is their last area of growth. (Many adults are still growing spiritually.) Most parents will only lay the foundations for spiritual growth.

You can help your child grow spiritually by:

- Answering the "big" questions about life and death, the universe, the meaning of life in a matter-of-fact manner as best you can.
- Encouraging him or her to be active in the organized religion you are active in.
- Encouraging him or her to look at a variety of religions or philosophies if you do not have an organized religion.
- Discussing spiritual matters in your home so that he or she is comfortable with such concepts.
- Agreeing between yourselves, if yours is a religiously mixed family, on the basic concepts you want your child to have.

Fostering Independence

Throughout this chapter it has been suggested that you foster independence in your children. Two-career parents are in a better position to do this than families in a more traditional setting. Out of necessity, children of two-career families must take on independence because Mom and Dad do not have endless hours to dote on their every need. Fostering independence in a child is important whether both parents are working or not. The child will not be living with you or dependent on you forever. In fact, nature has a way of making adolescence rough enough that we all, both parents and teenagers, breathe a sigh of relief when teenagers decide to move out!

There are a variety of ways to foster independence:

- Encourage your child to do things for himself or herself. If for example, you know that he or she can dress himself or herself, then encourage that. You may be surprised at some of the outfits arrived at, but it gives you an opportunity for teaching your child about color coordination. Have a button made that says, "I dressed myself this morning," thus giving your child pride (and explaining the odd combination when you send him off to preschool).
- Encourage your child to try new things.
- Assign chores that are appropriate for their ages and let them set their own schedules to meet deadlines.
- Don't communicate (verbally or nonverbally) your concern when your child tries something new. Remember, children are natural risk takers, adults are not. Just because they make one mistake doesn't mean they're washed up for life. This is not to say you should allow your children to do everything they want. As much as a three-year-old wants to play in the street, it is not safe, so you need to set limits. Be realistic, however, in the limits you set. For example, it is unrealistic to tell your children they cannot ride a bike until they are 12 because children are physically and mentally capable of doing so at a much earlier age.
- Give your children opportunities to test their independence in a protective environment.

Appropriate Amounts of Independence

Parents with more than one child have the advantage of knowing what is appropriate in terms of the amount of independence children should have because they have already learned (or experimented) with their first child. Unfortunately, there are not any hard and fast rules about what is appropriate because the amount of independence varies based on individuals, community standards, religious upbringing and cultural standards. For example, observations of friends of ours that live in Sweden show a marked difference between the way independence is viewed for children in Sweden and the United States. Swedish parents expect their children to be dependent until they start to school at age seven. Then the children are expected to make decisions on their own and act quite independently. American parents are much more gradual in their allowing of independence with 18 being the magic age for complete independence. Some conservative religions allow less social independence than the more liberal religions. The amount of independence you give your child will be based on your religion, community and your personal level or comfort in giving your children independence.

Here are a few (but hardly comprehensive) guidelines:

1. **Infants:** By age one the child can handle being out of sight of a parent or childcare worker for brief periods of time. The infant can still suffer from separation anxiety and will need to check to make sure an adult is around.

2. **Toddler:** By age three, toddlers are capable of dressing themselves (not intricate snaps or buttons), playing away from an adult with minimal supervision (in a safe environment), and walking next door to a friend's house by themselves (in a safe neighborhood, without crossing a street and with parents watching).

3. **Preschooler:** Preschoolers are capable of dressing themselves, selecting their own clothes to wear with minimal supervision, playing unsupervised in a safe environment with an occasional check by an adult, walking to a friend's house nearby, and deciding on what they want to eat in a restaurant with adult limits set on the selection.

4. **Elementary School Age:** School-age children are able to help select their own clothes when purchasing them, walk to school, play unsupervised, decide on what they want to eat in a restaurant with adult limits set on price, walk to a friend's house who lives in the neighborhood, do chores on their own schedule (meeting your deadlines), go to an overnight camp, stay overnight at a friend's, go to a movie with a friend without adult supervision (in a safe neighborhood).

5. **The Preadolescent:** The Preadolescents are able to buy their own clothes with guidelines (thus avoiding the more outlandish fads), be given their own money at restaurants and order from the menu on their own, go to the malls with a friend, have their own telephone with guidelines on its use.

6. **The Adolescent:** Adolescents are capable of having their own clothing allowance and living by their "mistakes," driving a car, taking trips by themselves or with friends (the older the adolescent, the longer the trip), having a job and taking on the responsibility that goes with it, choosing their own friends, owning their own car and taking care of it.

Letting Go

How you handle independence as a parent will decide how easily you let go of your children. For many parents, the ages of 18 to 22 mark a transitional stage: children going off to college, the service or work, but popping back into your life on vacations, leave or when they run out of money and need a place to live. If you have encouraged your children to be independent, they will long to be out on their own and the stays at home will become fewer and fewer until finally they will be referred to as visits. Then your child has achieved true adulthood.

You can prepare yourself for letting go by doing so gradually. It has been said that our children are not ours but are merely passing through us. In nature when you nurture something, you give it what it needs to stand on its own. The same is true of children. It is natural to feel both sad and elated when your children finally leave home. And it is natural for them to want to leave home but want to stay. Fostering their independence will help both you and your children make the transition.

Motivation and Rewards

Another way to meet your children's needs is by motivating them and rewarding them for doing something well. Rewards, like discipline and the amount of independence, should be based on the age or maturity of the child. Naturally, what motivates a four-year-old will not motivate a 15-year-old. Even within a particular age group you will find that some children are motivated by material objects while others are motivated by words of praise.

Fair Versus Equal

Do not get caught in the trap that everything must be *equal* among your children. Everything must be *fair*, but fair is not the same as equal. If you treat your children equally then you will have exactly the same standards for each child. Allowing your five-year-old son to date because his 16-year-old brother does is treating them equally. Giving your 16-year-old son the same allowance as his five-year-old brother is treating them equally. However, it is not fair to either child. As much as children do not like to hear it, particularly younger children who want to do what older children are doing, treating them equally is not fair. Strive to find ways to motivate and reward each child based on age and abilities.

Types of Rewards

For some parents, rewards include money or materialistic items. But there are many other kinds of rewards that motivate children.

1. **Physical:** Hugs, kisses, pats on the back, doing something with the child are all types of physical rewards.

2. **Verbal:** "Atta boys" or "Atta girls," praise, "bragging" to others within earshot of your child are types of verbal rewards.

3. **Responsibility:** Giving children more responsibility because they have done a good job will motivate some.

4. **Privileges:** Staying up late, watching television when it's not normally allowed, having a friend overnight, and driving the family car are all possible privileges that may motivate.

5. **Monetary/materialistic:** Paying children, giving them points that may be used to "buy" something, encouraging them to work toward a goal of a new bike or a new outfit are all examples of monetary or materialistic rewards used to motivate.

Plan, Do and Evaluate

There is an old maxim taught in many schools of home economics that says you should *Plan, Do and Evaluate*. If the communication lines are open between you and your spouse, then this is an effective way to meet the needs of your children. Plan on how you are going to meet their needs. What kinds of motivation will you use? How will you foster independence? What can you do to help each of them grow in the five different areas? Then, once you have put your "plan" into action, evaluate its effectiveness as you go along and change it, if necessary, so it is more effective. The fewer rules you use, the easier it is to change.

Remember: *Management is a thinking process.* As a parent, you are the ultimate manager.

Rewards to Motivate Children

- Physical
- Verbal
- Responsibility
- Privileges
- Monetary/materialistic

Reprinted from Jim Dugger, *Parenting: Ward and June Don't Live Here Anymore* by permission of National Press Publications, Shawnee Mission, Kansas.

The Single Parent

If you are a single parent, you know that running a household by yourself and caring for young children add up to an enormous job.

Some years ago, the *nuclear family* (two parents and their children, all living in the same house) was viewed as the only way to raise happy, healthy kids. Today we know that this view is no longer realistic. One in three marriages ends in divorce. In 1975, there were 7.2 million households (13 percent of all households) headed by women alone.

Because of the reduced finances of the single-parent family, many mothers of young children must work outside the home. In the spring of 1973, more than half of the mothers of school-age children and nearly 40 percent of the mothers with children under age 6 were either working or looking for work (U.S. Bureau of the Census). This trend is increasing. As more mothers go to work, some people have become concerned that children will be harmed by being cared for by someone other than the mother. Researchers, however, have found the following:

1. Most children develop bonds with several people. These bonds are similar to the ones made with the mother. (Children can feel secure with other adults *who care.*)
2. The *quality* of a child's family relationships, not the *quantity* of contact, is important (so that even if you have just a small amount of time to spend, but really pay attention to your children during that time, you will be giving a lot).
3. Working mothers who enjoy their jobs and don't feel guilty about working are just as good parents as non-working mothers.
4. Mothers who aren't working but would like to be, or working mothers who are under too much stress, sometimes have children who aren't so well adjusted. (Remember to take care of your own needs and to relax a little so that you can help your kids to do the same.)

Many working mothers have found it helpful to establish a *family routine* with their children. These parents pick up their children at the same time after work each day (which helps make the children feel more secure). These mothers take time to let the kids know their help is *regularly* needed—to set the table for dinner, etc. The children feel needed and know that they are contributing to the family. After dinner, the mother spends some amount of time with the children on a *regular* basis (time set aside for the kids that they know is theirs). A single-parent family can be a good place for children to grow, as long as the parent is providing a *secure* home, filled with love and caring.

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

When Daddy Is Gone

Children learn what it means to be a male or to be female by watching the adults around them and then following these adult's example. If the father is gone from the home, the child must find someone else of the same sex to imitate. A single mother can help her children by providing "father substitutes." Grandfathers can be excellent father substitutes, as they often have the time and patience to enjoy children, knowing that they can return to a quieter setting when the visit is over. Grandfathers and grandmothers can also keep children in touch with family traditions and can share valuable stories about the past. Some other sources for children who need a father image are:

1. Uncles and nephews
2. Scout leaders
3. Community group leaders
4. Big brothers
5. Teachers
6. Church people
7. A mother's considerate boyfriend

Studies have shown that boys tend to have a greater problem than girls do in adjusting to a fatherless home. Despite these findings, both boys and girls need substitutes for the missing parent.

One noted anthropologist suggests that every home needs *two adults*. The adults need not be biological parents. In fact, they could be two sisters, a grandmother and the mother, two friends and their children, etc. The two-adult family helps:

1. Children to see that different people have different ideas.
2. Children to hear adult conversation (a mother alone might speak too often on only the child's level).
3. The mother to share the task of parenting.
4. Children to know that they are loved by more than one adult.

The more emotional support a single mother gets, the more she can help her children feel safe, secure, and loved.

There are many agencies that deal with parental absence. Parents without Partners, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, family service agencies, the YMCA and YWCA, Jewish Family Services, and local churches are all sources of support for single mothers.

Being a single parent can be a tremendous responsibility as well as a great joy. Encourage the "Four L's" (Loving, Living, Listening, and Learning) in your child's life and you will have done your part to make this world a better place in which to live.

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

Parenting After the Smoke Clears
How to End the Fighting

Working together after the divorce? "It's a slick trick if you can do it." Yet you must try. Many divorcing parents understand that they can go on actively being mother and father to their children even though they no longer are husband and wife. They recognize the value of cooperative parenting for their children and for themselves. They understand that the single most destructive aspect of divorce for children is disrupted parenting, and that the children need the support and role modeling that each parent can give.

Single parents themselves appreciate the prospect of predictable time off, alternatives and supplements to day care, help with transporting children to and from their activities, and the constructive support of another authority.

How do you accomplish cooperative parenting in the midst of hurt, grief, anger, and adversary proceedings where the danger exists that the children will be used to express an adult's unhappiness? What does cooperative parenting require of the adults, the children, and their life circumstances?

The adult's role
First and foremost, you must choose cooperative parenting and work to make it happen. This decision may be part of predivorce deliberations or you may have to wait for grief and anger to subside. In either case, enlightened self-interest helps. Both parents have two tasks: to parent their children adequately and to rebuild their own lives. Cooperative parenting can make both easier.

Before either parent can interact with the other in a positive way, he or she must find a way to let go of the marriage. This means that the marriage has to be brought to an irrevocable end, with sensitivity to the needs and feelings of all family members. Both people need to mourn their loss and let go of both

Reprinted from Robert E. Lee, "Parenting After the Smoke Clears: How to End the Fighting," *Family Advocate,* Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

hope and outrage. Feelings must be resolved or contained, even though they may be inflamed by future events, such as a former partner's success, dating, or remarriage.

Both parents need to make long-term commitments to be there for their children. In so doing, the parents must be able to separate their own needs from their children's. They must appreciate the value of success and stability in the former spouse's life. In addition, they must be able to give the children permission to love both parents. They must not use the children to hold on to or hurt the other partner, or enmesh the child in adult frustrations.

Both parents must want to play a significant role and act responsibly, complying with child-support rules, visitation schedules, and other responsibilities. At the same time, either out of altruism or enlightened self-interest (such as wanting time off or meeting the demands of a work schedule), each parent must be willing to let the other have a meaningful influence on the child. This means accepting the other's values, standards, and methods, and letting him or her share some duties and assume full responsibility for others. All of this requires confidence in a child's love and the capacity to tolerate the child's investment in the other parent and eventually a stepparent.

Finally, the divorced couple must develop a respect for the former partner in his or her role as parent—"He wasn't much of a husband, but he's a great dad"—and trust the other's parenting skills.

It helps if the adults are opportunistic. That is, if he or she can rejoice in a chance to be alone, have a more spontaneous social life, or bring a date home. It also helps if the parents' expectations of themselves, their children, and the other are realistic. Of course, it also helps if the adults are able to live with a certain degree of ambiguity and tension.

Finally, it is important that the children's grandparents and, to a lesser extent, other extended family members, are committed to the benefits of cooperative parenting after divorce. They need to believe in and support the goals and techniques of the parents. Otherwise they may raise substantial barriers.

The children's role

If cooperative parenting is going to work, not only the parents but the children must acknowledge the reality of the marital breakup, grieve, and move on. If they are in denial, angry, afraid, mourning, or preoccupied with parental reconciliation, they are not going to let their parents successfully get on with separate lives. They may believe that as long as they are not thriving, or there is turmoil, their parents may come to regret and perhaps even reverse their decision to separate.

The children must disengage from whatever parental conflict there may be and get on with their own lives. If a parent seeks to involve them in the divorce battles or solicits help with adult needs or frustrations, or if loyalty demands are too strong, the child may need counseling.

The children must learn to participate in two families, replete with different authorities, people, rules, homes, opportunities, conveniences, and status. They need to be flexible, planning their activities around the requirements of custodial and visitation schedules. The children also need to give up their benefits of playing one parent against the other. They need to communicate fully with both parents and avoid secrets, playing favorites, and manipulation.

A child's age and gender influence how he or she adapts to cooperative parenting. Preschool children, for example, are more dependent on a primary caretaker, fixed residence, and set ways of doing things. They also lack a good sense of time. Consequently, they don't easily tolerate moving from one household to another. Teenagers, who are all wrapped up in their own activities, often become disenchanted with visitation. It is easy for the non-custodial parent to perceive a child's balking as rejection, or to suspect sabotage by the former partner. Parents should resist feeling hurt, jealous, or outraged.

School-age boys are easily given to antagonistic relationships with single mothers. At such times the mother could use the support of the father, and the boy needs interaction with him. Likewise, as a girl moves into womanhood, her father's attention, acceptance, and guidance can play a crucial role in her self-esteem and behavior.

The role of the divorce
Behaviors of all family members vary with the stages of divorce. In the immediate days and months following the separation or divorce, the reactions of the distraught children may be magnified by their parents' diminished capacity to parent. The adults might want to work together to help the children but may be overcome by the hurt they experience in each other's presence or around the children and family home. "Ending the marriage" and working together as parents may not be possible at this time.

However, after this initial year or so of pain and turmoil, there follows a transition period of rebuilding. The process of rebuilding—psychologically, socially, and occupationally—may bring difficult work schedules, unusual financial needs, and opportunities away from the home. There will be need for "time off" from being a parent. In this rebuilding period the adults can aid the children by making things possible for each other. This is because their children will benefit to the extent that both parents are confident, emotionally stable, and enjoy social, occupational, and financial well-being.

A parent may remarry. Both the children and the nonmarrying parent may need reassurance that a major commitment to the children will continue, and that nothing will interfere with each adult's relationship to the child—including a petition for change of custody based on the new circumstances.

How close the parents live to each other after the divorce also makes a difference. If they are far apart, it is more difficult, but not impossible, for the noncustodial parent to play a meaningful role in the children's lives. However, parents who believe in the value of cooperative parenting should keep each other well-informed and make joint decisions on important matters concerning the children's welfare. This is one of those times when trust and ability to live with ambiguity and tension are useful. The absent parent can also encourage a sense of closeness with a child by following sports teams together, recommending books, playing games by mail, and visiting by phone. The custodial parent, in turn, can encourage the children to communicate often with the absent parent and to send messages on birthdays and holidays.

A hazard for children

Research indicates that the major hazard for the well-being of children of divorce is the diminished or disrupted parenting that so often occurs, and may become permanent. Generally, children will do well if grief, anger, distrust, and manipulation are not present between parents—and between parents and children—in the postdivorce relationship.

Although the parents are no longer husband and wife, the children benefit immeasurably if their parents can cooperate in being involved and constructive mothers and fathers, and are mindful and respectful of the other's role.

Through a Child's Eyes

How to Help the Youngster Cope

Divorce is a different experience for adults than it is for children. For the adult, divorce closes a troubled chapter in his or her life. It represents a voluntary decision by at least one partner to end the marriage. It is a choice to leave a stressful, unhappy or high-conflict relationship.

For the child, there is no such clear break with the past. Surprising as it may be to many adults, the child is usually profoundly distressed by the parents' decision to divorce. If the parents have not been openly fighting, many children are unaware of the unhappiness in the marriage. Some may be sensitive to the moods of their parents, but others are wholly occupied with their own concerns, their own friends, their own activities. Many children are too young to be aware of the conflicts.

Even when there is open conflict or physical violence between parents, children do not necessarily welcome divorce. Whatever its shortcomings, their family is the world they know; they just wish the fighting would stop. Most children would prefer the familiar troubles of the marriage to the insecurities of the divorce, unless they fear for their safety or the safety of a parent.

Children have a great deal of difficulty dealing with the breakup of their parents' marriage. They need a lot of help, ideally from both parents as well as from members of the extended family, teachers, and other adults who are in a position to reach out to them. The child of divorce needs this help as much as the child who has lost a parent or other beloved family member through death.

Unfortunately, when it comes to divorce, friends and relatives tend to shy away from getting involved. They worry about saying the wrong thing; sometimes they are afraid that the divorce will highlight the

Reprinted from Judith S. Wallerstein, "Through a Child's Eyes: How to Help the Youngster Cope," *Family Advocate*, Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

tensions in their own relationships. Unlike other family crises in which neighbors and friends rally around to help, divorce is a lonely time, especially for the children. They worry that they are going to be lost in the shuffle.

How children react

It is important that parents understand the reactions of their children, because children are often unable to talk about their feelings. These children may be worried about burdening already-troubled parents with their own needs, or may find it altogether impossible to express their pain and confusion. Often, when children do articulate their needs, or express their feelings through behavior, parents are so preoccupied with their own problems that they pay little attention.

What are children's reactions at the time of the marital breakup? Children are very frightened. Their familiar supports have collapsed and they are intensely worried about what is going to happen to them. In this sense, all children of divorce are alike. However, many of their reactions are specific to their particular age group. By understanding the way children react at various ages, parents will be able to help each child survive this family crisis.

Preschool children. Because very young children are totally dependent on parents for their physical care, they are most afraid of being abandoned. In their eyes, if one parent can suddenly "disappear," so might the other one. These children may have great difficulty in separating, especially from the custodial parent, at all times during the day and at bedtime. Their concepts of time and distance are limited. It may not comfort them to be told that "Daddy will come next Monday." And when they go to visit at the noncustodial parent's new and unfamiliar house, they constantly worry that, like Hansel and Gretel, they may not be able to find their way home again.

Preschoolers may become anxious and regress to earlier behaviors. They may have trouble settling down or sleeping through the night. They may resume thumb sucking, bedwetting, and their Linuslike attachment to a security object. Young children are likely to become increasingly cranky, without apparent reason. They may act out by pinching a younger baby or hitting a playmate. Because young children do not understand cause and effect, it is no wonder they cannot understand their parents' behavior. They often feel that their own real or imagined naughtiness has caused the divorce, and they can become sad and withdrawn.

Early school years, ages 5 to 8. Children in this age range are likely to be preoccupied with feelings of loss, rejection, guilt, and loyalty conflicts. They are profoundly worried that they will be replaced in the affections of the parent—usually the father—who has left home. Little boys may ask, "Will Daddy get a new dog? A new little boy?" Many show an intense longing for their fathers that borders on physical pain. They may be worried about being left in the sole care of the mother who, in their unconscious fantasy, drove their father out of the home. Little girls often cling to romantic daydreams of a father who "loves me best" and who will surely come back to them "someday." These fears and fantasies may be reflected in various ways. The children may become easily upset, weepy, contrary, or unable to concentrate or perform at their usual level in school. They often see the divorce as a battle in which they are required to take sides.

Later school years, ages 9 to 12. At this age, when young children are developing their social skills, they rely heavily on their parents to provide the haven from which they venture forth into the larger world. Divorce for these children threatens this security. Their behavior reflects this anxiety.

Many children become intensely angry at parents for breaking up the family. They can be especially furious at the parent whom they perceive as having caused the divorce. They may suffer from a mixture of grief, anxiety, acute loneliness, and the frustration of powerlessness. This insecurity and their tendency to think in terms of black and white make them vulnerable to being drawn into mischievous alignments with one parent against the other in the divorce war. Sensitive children may also worry exceedingly about their troubled parents and can become intent on helping them. They may adopt the pseudo-adult role of companion and confidant to a needy parent, sometimes sacrificing an awareness of their own needs. This could mean they would be unaware of their own needs.

Children of this age sometimes complain of somatic symptoms, such as stomachaches or headaches. Their peer relationships may suffer as they become preoccupied with their "responsibilities" in the disrupted household. Delinquent behaviors may appear, such as petty stealing and lying. The children can be sexually stimulated, overanxious, and sometimes hyperactive because of the dating and sexual behavior they observe in their parents.

Adolescence. Divorcing parents often make the mistake of assuming that their teenage children are old enough and sophisticated enough to understand the situation and accommodate to it. Parents do not realize how frightening divorce is to adolescents. Teenagers are fearful that they will repeat their parent's failures. They become acutely anxious when faced with the evidence of their parents' vulnerabilities and begin to worry about their own chances for lasting relationships. It disturbs adolescents to see their parents as people with sexual feelings and problems. The collapse of the household is especially upsetting to these young people, who have a strong need for family structure to help them set limits on their own emerging sexual and aggressive impulses.

Many adolescents can be helpful to their parents and develop a sense of pride in their contributions to the family welfare. Others respond by taking on too much responsibility for the care of a parent or the upkeep of the household. In the process, they may forfeit important relationships with friends or sabotage their education and social potential.

Ten Ways to Help

Every aspect of a child's life can be made easier by the parents at the time of the divorce crisis. Parents should prepare their children for what lies ahead in as much concrete detail as possible. There is no way to prevent children from being distressed by their parents' divorce; there are, however, important ways to help ease their fears and confusion:

1. Parents should tell their children about the divorce as soon as it has become a firm decision. Think very carefully about how you announce the separation, for what you say or fail to say will be long remembered. Children have the right to understand why the divorce is happening; it is often the major crisis in their lives. If possible, both parents should tell all the children at the same time. Children can genuinely help each other at this time and take courage from the support of their siblings. If there are wide differences in the children's ages, the parents will want to talk later to each child separately on a level that the child can truly understand.

2. The parents should express their sadness about the breakup of the family because it will give the children necessary permission to mourn without having to hide their feelings of loss from the adults or from themselves.

3. The parents should present the decision to divorce as a solution that the parents reached together, after they had tried every other way they could think of to solve their differences. In this way, the adults can convey the sense that they are responsible, loving parents who remain committed to the children even though they have reluctantly decided to go their separate ways.

4. Parents should explain honestly that things will change. Life will be temporarily disorganized, routines will be disrupted. One parent will be moving out of the home. The house may be sold, and the family may have to move to a new neighborhood. The mother, if not already doing so, may go back to school or take a part-time or full-time job. In short, the parents must make it clear that the divorce will bring many changes that the whole family will have to face and overcome.

5. The parents should tell children of all major developments, as the family reorganizes. Children feel powerless at divorce and should be invited to make suggestions in matters concerning them. Adults should seriously consider these suggestions. They should be assured that they will have a say, for instance, in setting up the visiting arrangements. Once the schedule is settled, it should be explained to the children in detail. The children should not, however, be made to feel responsible for making major decisions. The goal is to involve them appropriately so that they can feel that they are participating in working out a solution to the family crisis.

6. The parents should advise the children that the divorce will not weaken the bond between parent and child, even if they live apart. They need to be reassured that, though parents may divorce each other, they do not divorce their children. The children should be told realistically that everybody will have to work hard to maintain these important connections.

7. The parents must stress to the children that the divorce is not in any way the fault of the child. They must be assured that the problem existed strictly between the two adults. The children should never be allowed to assume guilt for causing the breakup.

8. The parents must state clearly that the divorce is an irrevocable decision and that the children should not and cannot waste their time and energies in the fruitless schemes and fantasies of bringing their parents back together.

9. The parents will want to make every effort to keep separate their own hurt, anger, and needs from the needs of the children. Children have a right to their own feelings and should not be asked to take sides or be forced to wander a no-man's-land in the divorce war.

10. Above all, both mother and father must give their children permission to love and maintain a relationship with the other parent. This may be the hardest task of all for the adults, but it can be done. With a caring, courageous effort on the part of each parent, the children, even in the midst of their turmoil, can feel supported and loved.

Ten Ways to Help Children Through Divorce

Every aspect of a child's life can be made easier by the parents at the time of the divorce crisis. Parents should prepare their children for what lies ahead in as much concrete detail as possible. There is no way to prevent children from being distressed by their parents' divorce; there are, however, important ways to help ease their fears and confusion:

1. Parents should tell their children about the divorce as soon as it has become a firm decision. Think very carefully about how you announce the separation, for what you say or fail to say will be long remembered. Children have the right to understand why the divorce is happening; it is often the major crisis in their lives. If possible, both parents should tell all the children at the same time. Children can genuinely help each other at this time and take courage from the support of their siblings. If there are wide differences in the children's ages, the parents will want to talk later to each child separately on a level that the child can truly understand.

2. The parents should express their sadness about the breakup of the family because it will give the children necessary permission to mourn without having to hide their feelings of loss from the adults or from themselves.

3. The parents should present the decision to divorce as a solution that the parents reached together, after they had tried every other way they could think of to solve their differences. In this way, the adults can convey the sense that they are responsible, loving parents who remain committed to the children even though they have reluctantly decided to go their separate ways.

4. Parents should explain honestly that things will change. Life will be temporarily disorganized, routines will be disrupted. One parent will be moving out of the home. The house may be sold, and the family may have to move to a new neighborhood. The mother, if not already doing so, may go back to school or take a part-time or full-time job. In short, the parents must make it clear that the divorce will bring many changes that the whole family will have to face and overcome.

5. The parents should tell children of all major developments, as the family reorganizes. Children feel powerless at divorce and should be invited to make suggestions in matters concerning them. Adults should seriously consider these suggestions. They should be assured that they will have a say, for instance, in setting up the visiting arrangements. Once the schedule is settled, it should be explained to the children in detail. The

Reprinted from Judith S. Wallerstein, "Through a Child's Eyes: How to Help the Youngster Cope," *Family Advocate,* Summer 1990, by permission of the American Bar Association.

children should not, however, be made to feel responsible for making major decisions. The goal is to involve them appropriately so that they can feel that they are participating in working out a solution to the family crisis.

6. The parents should advise the children that the divorce will not weaken the bond between parent and child, even if they live apart. They need to be reassured that, though parents may divorce each other, they do not divorce their children. The children should be told realistically that everybody will have to work hard to maintain these important connections.

7. The parents must stress to the children that the divorce is not in any way the fault of the child. They must be assured that the problem existed strictly between the two adults. The children should never be allowed to assume guilt for causing the breakup.

8. The parents must state clearly that the divorce is an irrevocable decision and that the children should not and cannot waste their time and energies in the fruitless schemes and fantasies of bringing their parents back together.

9. The parents will want to make every effort to keep separate their own hurt, anger, and needs from the needs of the children. Children have a right to their own feelings and should not be asked to take sides or be forced to wander a no-man's-land in the divorce war.

10. Above all, both mother and father must give their children permission to love and maintain a relationship with the other parent. This may be the hardest task of all for the adults, but it can be done. With a caring, courageous effort on the part of each parent, the children, even in the midst of their turmoil, can feel supported and loved.

Discipline With Love

Children believe that the world and all the people in it are here to serve their needs. Remember that this attitude is not *bad*, but just a *natural stage of development*. **Discipline** is the act of helping a child see what happens because of his or her actions. It should be done in a positive, non-angry way. Discipline is *not* the same as **physical punishment** (hitting, using the belt, etc.), which usually has the negative effect of showing the child that it's okay to hit others when the child is big enough (an adult). It is easy to overpunish when you use physical punishment, because if you are angry, you may hit your child too hard. (A recent statistic showed that 85 percent of people in prison had been abused as children.) If you overpunish the child, you also run the risk of damaging the relationship between your child and you.

We firmly believe that discipline with love is the best way to deal with children. We would all agree that *children need limits*. Adults need to explain limits so that a young child learns safety, how to get along with others, and, most important of all, *self-discipline*. For a variety of reasons, some people overdiscipline children. These people set very strict limits because they don't understand how children grow and develop. When the children fail to follow the strict rules, these adults get first frustrated, then angry. Often the child ends up being hit for something she or he does not even understand. An example might be the mother of a 6-month-old baby who is angry because she can't toilet train the child. (If she understood the child's normal development, she would know that what she's expecting is *not possible* for a child of this age.) The mother spanks and hits that baby for something beyond the baby's control. This child learns to *fear* her or his mother. In the strictest sense, this example might be considered *child abuse* (willfully

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

inflicting injury on a child). Statistics show that most child abuse is inflicted on children under the age of 3—children who are completely *defenseless*. In the United States, child abuse accounts for more deaths of young children that *any* other factor.

Child Abuse

Child abuse can be *emotional* as well as physical. People who say things that hurt a child's positive feelings about herself or himself could be considered emotional child abusers. People who abuse children come from all walks of life. Some are rich; others are poor. Some are parents; others are step-parents, older brothers or sisters, aunts or uncles, babysitters, or boyfriends. In short, anyone, given the proper situation, could be a potential child abuser; it is not only the mentally ill who abuse children. Ninety percent of all child abusers can be helped. Child abusers can learn new ways of dealing with their anger. They can learn to break the *cycle of abuse* (most people who abuse children were themselves abused as children). If the cycle is not broken, the children of these people will most likely grow up to abuse their children, as well. And so it continues, on and on, generation after generation. The cycle *must* be broken.

The fact that you *feel* like ignoring, leaving, or hitting your child does not mean that you are a child abuser. This information is given to make you aware that child abuse is a *real* problem for many and a *potential* problem for *everyone*. Instead of striking your child, stop for a moment and think: "Am I going to hit my child because I'm frustrated? Because I'm under stress? Because I'm angry?"

Release your anger in a way that is not harmful—hit a pillow, take a walk, call a friend, etc.

Children often misbehave because they don't know any other way to act or because they want attention. If we help our children to learn good behavior and if they know they will be rewarded for it, they won't have a need to behave badly or hurtfully. Again, we are *not* saying that you should never discipline your child. Children need to know the rules, and they need to know the consequences for ignoring or breaking the rules. **Help your child to be good** by doing these things:

1. Think about family rules (limits) that are important to you, and let the kids help set some of the rules.
2. **Talk** with your children to let them know why you have these rules ("Bedtime at 8:00 because bodies need rest for good health," *not* "Bedtime at 8:00 because I said so!").
3. Tell the child what will happen if she or he breaks a rule (stay indoors, go to her or his room, no T.V., etc.).
4. **Be consistent.** Don't discipline a child once for breaking a rule and then look the other way the next time the child breaks the rule. This only confuses the child.
5. If a child breaks a rule, let her or him see the **consequences.** Don't yell and scream and nag. Simply announce the rule the child has broken and apply the discipline you agreed upon earlier. ("John, you didn't pick up your toys when I asked you to. Now you will have to miss your T.V. program while you pick them up.")
6. **Reward good behavior.** Be sure to tell your child that you noticed when she or he did what she or he was supposed to do. A little praise goes a long way. ("Tania, your room looks very good. I like the way you cleaned it up without my asking.") Don't just notice the negative things. *"Catch" your child at being good!*

7. Isolate the child when it is necessary to do so. There may be times when your child will just not listen to reason. First, think about whether or not your child is feeling all right. A child who is sick or tired will have a hard time being "good." If the problem is not from illness, etc., but is a temper tantrum, put the child in her or his room. Let the child know that she or he can be mad or cry, but that if the child needs to scream, etc., she or he will have to do it where the rest of the family will not be disturbed. Tell the child that she or he can rejoin the family when the screaming, etc., stops. When the child returns, give her or him a hug and *talk about the problem then.* We all make mistakes. Don't remind the child that she or he has been bad. Accept her or his new attitude and go on from there.

Discipline With Love

- **Talk** with your kids
- **Specify** consequences for breaking rules
- **Be consistent**
- **Discipline immediately**
- **Reward** good behavior
- **Isolate** your child when necessary
- **Talk** about problems

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

Helping Families Overcome the "If Onlys"

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to serve with dignity and honor in combating one of America's worst enemies. Picture yourself as an integral part of a select team serving your community and nation by aiding the families with which you work in overcoming the "if onlys." While not a secret mission, your influence and power will be enhanced by the element of surprise as you help parents in choosing loving and caring activities they can easily do with their children. If your efforts stimulate the desired results, the parents will not even know what they overcame . . . . until one day they realize that they feel pride for the relationships they have with their children, instead of living with the guilt and regret of the "if onlys" they often hear from neighbors and friends.

You know the "if onlys." We all do! "If only I had played more with my children." "If only I had not let my work get in the way of rolling on the floor or swapping stories with my child." "If only I had worried less and relaxed more and enjoyed my children . . . . before they had grown up so fast." You know the words and the dejected tone, the messages of regret of missing some rich opportunities.

Should you choose to join the fight to reduce the "if onlys," you should know in advance that we will never eliminate them completely. However, any reduction will be beneficial for families, assuming they are replaced by activities and words and expressions of care and concern. For when there is devoted time to activities and words and expressions of care and concern, the "if onlys" are rarely heard. They simply cannot thrive in a caring environment.

Now, lest this should seem like a huge task to you or for the families with which you work, let me assure you very quickly that what I am suggesting need not take much time, much effort, cost much

Reprinted from the newsletter of the National Center for Family Literacy by permission of the author, Ted Bowman.

in terms of energy or money, or require a lot of new skills. No, to the contrary, the "if onlys" are best reduced by simple, easily done caring acts that strengthen persons and families. It could mean turning off the TV for a few minutes. Or playing a quick game of tag with your child. It could take the time of a warm hug or the words, "I love you." We'll add other methods in just a bit. For now, I'm checking your willingness to join in this mission. I know you are already busy and one more thing can sound like three too many. All I'm asking is that you make this part of your work more intentional . . . . that you talk with your colleagues about it . . . . and that you even enlist parents in joining with you in this important task. Are you ready?

Catch Kids (and Parents) Doing Something Right

Affirmation is contagious. If can also be a climate changer. The "if onlys" thrive best in an atmosphere where affirmation is absent or limited. There they got their start, grow and grow, until one day they pop out. "If only I hadn't been looking so hard at what my child didn't do and could have seen some of his good side."

There are many opportunities to catch kids and parents doing something right. A smile here, progress here, helpfulness offered, support given, all this and more every day. Unless you call attention to such acts, they may go unnoticed by some who are more preoccupied with what's wrong or what's stressful in their lives. By catching children and parents you not only give them that rare gift of recognition and affirmation but you also teach by modeling, which can be the most powerful kind of teaching. Parents can learn by your actions and begin to see things in their children, fellow parents, even themselves that may have gone unseen or unheard of before.

Caring Acts for Busy Parents

When people get the "if onlys" their usual excuse for them is that they were too busy. "If only I hadn't been so busy. Before I knew it the kids were grown." Or, "If only I had more time, then I could do a better job."

If we aid busy parents in discovering and creating caring acts that don't require much time, effort, or energy we will be giving them a gift that will, as we've all heard, keep on giving. A group I met with recently came up with over 40 suggestions in less than 10 minutes. Here are some of them. Add yours to the list.

- playful touch
- a wink from across the room
- "taking five," joining a child for five minutes in a play activity
- sending a note of love in the lunch box
- making a favorite food
- taking over someone's regular chore
- watching their TV program, not yours
- listening to their music
- taking a walk together
- looking through the picture albums together
- a brief shoulder or back rub
- reading together
- "let" your child overhear you telling someone else how special he or she is

I once asked a group of parents to recall moments in their childhood when one of their parents or care-givers did something that left a lasting positive memory. One woman got real teary as she recalled a ritual that she and her father had, not every night, but with some regularity. They met at the refrigerator, each took out an orange, went over to the waste basket, peeled their oranges, ate them, and swapped a few stories about their day. This woman shared with the group that this action taught her how important it was to set aside special time with your children. It was a lesson she has never forgotten. As a parent she made caring acts a regular part of her household routine.

What a story! Not an "if only" story, because the "if onlys" strength had been thwarted by her commitment to caring. Spread a little sunshine this week. Watch the "if onlys" run in the other direction.

Pause: Take a Moment

Remember the good times from your childhood? These are great "treats" that you can share with your child while at the same time taking a break for a few quiet moments to relax together. As you tell your story to your child, notice the feelings you have about these special times from your past . . .

Then, let your child tell you a story.

You can give yourself and your child many simple treats by just *taking a couple of minutes to pause*. Watch a sunset, sing a little song, put on some music and dance, or just find some other ways to *breathe fully*.

Let your child lead you around the house and show you something she or he enjoys and wants to share with you. Take a moment to notice your child—to watch her or his excitement in telling you something important. These brief moments are some of the times your child will remember when she or he grows up—they can be special for both of you.

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

As Your Child Grows

As your child grows . . .

- **Tell** and **show** your child **often** (at least once a day) that you love her or him
- **Be aware** that some children talk, walk, and grow at a slower rate than others do
- **Try not to compare** your child with any other child of the same age
- **Be affectionate** (someone has said that we all need four hugs a day)
- **Listen to your child** (without interrupting)
- **Consult your doctor** if you are concerned about your child's growth—the earlier the problem is found, the easier it is to help

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

As Your Child Grows

As your child grows . . .

- **Tell** and **show** your child **often** (at least once a day) that you love her or him
- **Be aware** that some children talk, walk, and grow at a slower rate than others do
- **Try not to compare** your child with any other child of the same age
- **Be affectionate** (someone has said that we all need four hugs a day)
- **Listen to your child** (without interrupting)
- **Consult your doctor** if you are concerned about your child's growth—the earlier the problem is found, the easier it is to help

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

Taking Care of Yourself

Stop for a minute. Can you think of ten things that you did for yourself this week? No? Some of us find it much easier to do things for others. We even feel guilty when we take time for ourselves.

Remember, we are just like baskets. If our basket is full of good feelings, we can hand out those good things to others. If no one's been filling our basket and someone asks us for support or something, *it just isn't there to give.*

Start to fill your basket *today*. The more your basket gets filled, the more you will have to give to your kids. Try some of the "basket fillers" listed below or find your own ways to feel good. *You deserve it!*

One last thing. Don't isolate yourself! *Get involved* with other parents (P.T.A., Head Start parent groups, church, etc.). Share ideas, problems, and *solutions.* You'll get support from one another. Don't be embarrassed because you have a problem—we all have them.

"Basket Fillers"

- Have coffee with a friend
- Buy something just for you
- Get a babysitter and go do whatever you want—go shopping, take a bubble bath, etc.
- Write a friend
- Do your secret desire
- Take a craft class
- Read a book or a magazine
- Talk with a friend—ask them to just listen

Reprinted from the Head Start Child Development Corporation, *Single Mother's Resource Handbook* (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1982).

Unit 4
Skills to Enhance Effectiveness

Note to Instructors: Plan on spending nine classroom hours on "Unit 4: Skills to Enhance Effectiveness." The nine hours can be divided in any way that best meets the needs of your group. If you choose to divide the time evenly among the five Competencies, then spend roughly 1 hour and 45 minutes on each Competency.

Unit 1 includes:

14.0	Skills to Develop Self-Motivation
15.0	Skills to Make Appropriate and Realistic Decisions
16.0	Skills to Access Role Models/Mentors
17.0	Attaining/Enhancing Basic Academic Skills
18.0	Understanding Differences in the Workforce

Competency 14.0

Skills to develop self-motivation

14.01 Identify appropriate motivational models.
14.02 Develop a personal motivational plan.
14.03 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's personal motivational plan.
14.04 Identify resources to help deal with roadblocks.

Competency 14.0
Overview

In the midst of juggling family responsibilities, financial worries, school, and a job (or job-search), it is easy to lose steam. All of the daily concerns make it difficult to remember why we are working so hard. Motivation can be hard to maintain.

This Competency helps participants develop a plan for staying motivated. One of the most important ways to stay motivated is to have clear goals for the future. Focusing on the end result of our work helps us not get bogged down in the details.

In this Competency, participants will learn to clarify their goals and to develop a personal plan for self-motivation. Participants completing Competency 14.0: Skills to Develop Self-Motivation will be able to:

14.01 Identify appropriate motivational models
14.02 Develop a personal motivational plan
14.03 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's personal plan
14.04 Identify resources to help deal with roadblocks

Indicator 14.01 fosters a discussion of goal-setting. What are goals? Why is it important to focus on goals? Indicator 14.02 asks participants to begin developing their own plans for self-motivation. In the "Life Plans" Activity, participants write down short-term and long-term goals for themselves. In this Indicator, the instructor should ask participants to think about what motivates them. For instance, does setting up a system of rewards for accomplishments motivate some people? What kinds of rewards? For others, drawing a map or picture of their end-goals and posting the map in a prominent place is a good motivator. Indicator 14.03 asks participants to consider things that stand in the way of achieving their goals. Finally, in Indicator 14.04 the group discusses community and other resources to help overcome roadblocks.

Competency 14.0: Skills to develop self-motivation

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
14.01 Identify appropriate motivational models	Lecture; discussion	*Characteristics of Goals*
	Discussion	*Motivation*
14.02 Develop a personal motivational plan	Discussion	*Live, Love and Laugh*
	Activity	*Life Plans*
14.03 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's personal motivational plan	Activity	*Making a Dream Come True*
14.04 Identify resources to help deal with roadblocks	Discussion	*Instructor may choose to invite guest speakers*

Resources

Jeffers, Susan. (1987). Feel the fear and do it anyway. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Simon, Sidney B. (1989). Getting unstuck: Breaking through your barriers to change. New York: Warner Books.

Characteristics of Goals

A goal is a statement of an intentional result or outcome. It doesn't prescribe how to get there, but merely where to end up. (Paint the house, etc.)

Short-term goals are those things to be achieved in a week, month or year. (Finish a project, visit a sick friend, etc.)

Long-range goals are those things to be achieved in 2, 5, or 10 years. They create one's overall lifestyle and dreams. (Finish school, change careers, etc.)

A goal is a specific end result desired by some stated point in time. (Lose 10 pounds before ____.)

Short-term goals can be used as stages to achieve long-term goals, bit by bit. (Finish one of many courses for a certificate, diploma, degree, etc.)

A person's goals are derived from their values, experiences and expectations. (Finish training to get a well-paid position.)

Goals are achieved through activities. Activities may be enjoyed, but that does not make them a goal. (Reading and/or writing involved in a course.)

There may be a variety of feasible and acceptable activities that can help attain goals. (Doing outside research, volunteer, getting others involved.)

Setting goals offers the advantage of career and life planning. (Gives you a focus to aim for/work for, direction to your life.)

Most goals can be categorized as relating to family, career and/or personal development. (An individual's priorities and values determine their order of importance in life.)

Goals can be changed or modified as the situation changes. They can even be reversed if you find something more interesting or challenging to do, or perhaps technology has changed the field/job you originally planned on pursuing.

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Motivation

If we are looking for mental health, it is not reached through intelligence, mental struggle, or thought process but through positive feelings.

Key Thoughts:

Over 90 percent of your mental life is subconscious; it is always lifeward and constructive. Your subconscious is the builder of your body and maintains all its vital functions. It is on the job 24 hours a day and never sleeps.

The unconscious mind operates from ten processes.
The Mind . . .

- doesn't know the difference between real and unreal. Example: think about fingernails on a blackboard.
- only understands positive statements. Example: "Don't forget your lunch" translates as "forget your lunch."
- needs to believe what you want is possible—99.999% equals 0 in the mind. To affirm is to state that it is so and to maintain this belief as true, regardless of all evidence to the contrary. Don't force; when you force, you don't trust. Example: "I'll try to do that" will not work in the mind. The law of reversed effort is when your desires and imagination go against your thoughts. The subconscious is always controlled by your strongest thought. Trust that it will turn out the way it is supposed to.
- does not make judgments about good or bad. Anything that I say about myself comes true. Example: "I am always late," or "I cannot find that."
- only understands the present moment. Example: "I am always on time, wealthy, organized."
- only needs to know the end result, does not need to know the details. Example: We make a decision to drive home, and we get there and don't remember how we got there. Do not be concerned with details and means, but know the end result. Gain control by giving up control.
- only works when it is relaxed. When you use mental force you presuppose there is opposition. Anxiety and fear block the

Reprinted by permission of Paul E. Clayton, 145 Solana Village, Key West, Florida 33040.

subconscious mind. Example: knowing material before a test, being anxious, not knowing it during the test but remembering it after it's over.

- what ever the mind focuses on expands. Example: too much sleep, or tired before exercise—focus on energy after exercise.
- is attracted to that which it loves and is distracted from that which it hates. The subconscious mind will attract us toward people, places and things that will mirror what is going on in our mind. If you want to know what the mind is thinking, just look at the people, places and things with which you are surrounding yourself.
- repeats every pattern until we see that we are creating end results. Example: patterns in our life can not be changed when we blame others.

"I will only say things about myself that I want to be true for me."

Question: Do I want to be right or happy?

Universal understandings:

Motivation takes place when I experience control over a situation.

My attitude is directly related to my own self-esteem.

Live, Love and Laugh

First: You need to have some goals: "If you don't know where you're going, you will probably end up somewhere else."

Second: Selecting your goals is a matter of choosing which direction you want to go, not choosing places you want to end up. Life is in the running, not in the arriving.

Third: The possible directions that you can take will depend almost entirely on the number of assets you have going for you. Consequently, to expand your choices, you should be continually cultivating your assets. *You* will have to take the initiative. As the fellow said, "People who want milk should not seat themselves on a stool in the middle of a field in hopes that the cow will back up to them."

Fourth: With few exceptions, your achievement will be won gradually, not overnight, and you should proceed accordingly. The Persians had a proverb: "Do little things now; so shall big things come to thee by and by asking to be done."

Fifth: More than any other factor, your job, or more generally, your career, is going to determine how you live. Thus, give it a great deal of attention and thought. Those in this world who do not work, either by choice or by circumstance, do not amount to much. Usually, they do not even like themselves.

Sixth: Basic to everything is health. Take care of your body; it is your instrument of life. With health, you have a chance; without it, nothing.

Finally: Have fun. Don't take yourself too seriously. One of your first goals should be to develop a healthy perspective. Laugh a lot.

From *If You Don't Know Where You're Going, You'll Probably End Up Somewhere Else* by David Campbell, Ph.D. ©1974 Tabor Publishing, a division of DLM, Inc., Allen, TX 75002.

Life Plans

Complete the following sentences with those things that you think of immediately.

I would like to finish ________________________________

____

By the end of the year I want to ________________________________

____

By next month I'd like to ________________________________

____

I'd like to have enough money to ________________________________

____

What I want to change most about myself is ________________________________

____

One thing I'd like from my boyfriend/girlfriend is ________________________________

____

I'd like to be the kind of friend who ________________________________

____

One thing I'd really like to try is ________________________________

____

Some place I'd like to go is ________________________________

____

One of my good qualities that I'd like to develop further is ________________________________

____

Reprinted from *Life Planning Education: A Youth Development Program*, Rev. 1989, by permission of the Center for Population Options, 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 210, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Making a Dream Come True

Think of a goal—something you have dreamed of accomplishing in your future. It can be any type of goal: educational, personal, or financial.

Write the Goal: Be very specific.

A Target Date: When do you want to accomplish this goal?

Expected Benefits: What are the ways that reaching this goal will help you?

Plans: What are the steps you need to take to reach your goal?

1.
2.
3.

Difficulties and Roadblocks: What are the things that might keep you from achieving your goals?

1.
2.
3.

Solutions: What actions can you take to overcome these difficulties?

1.
2.
3.

Reprinted from *Life Planning Education: A Youth Development Program*, Rev. 1989, by permission of the Center for Population Options, 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 210, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Competency 15.0

Skills to make appropriate and realistic decisions

15.01 Identify problem-solving models.
15.02 Apply critical thinking to personal problem-solving.
15.03 Identify decision-making models.
15.04 Develop an individual decision-making/problem solving action plan.
15.05 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's plan.
15.06 Identify resources and strategies to overcome roadblocks and achieve one's plan.

Competency 15.0
Overview

Solving problems and making decisions are not easy tasks. These tasks are even more difficult for women who are socialized to believe that men will make all the major decisions for them. All women, and especially single women and displaced homemakers, need to build confidence in their own abilities to solve problems and make wise decisions.

In this Competency, participants learn about methods and models for solving problems and making decisions. Further, participants understand that there is no one "right way" to make a decision; they choose methods that feel comfortable to them.

This Competency helps participants understand problem-solving and decision-making strategies. Participants completing Competency 15.0: Skills to Make Appropriate and Realistic Decisions will be able to:

15.01 Identify problem-solving models
15.02 Apply critical thinking to personal problem-solving
15.03 Identify decision-making models
15.04 Develop an individual decision-making and problem-solving action plan
15.05 Identify roadblocks to achieving one's plan
15.06 Identify resources and strategies to overcome roadblocks

In Indicator 15.01, instructors discuss problem-solving models with participants. In Indicator 15.02, participants apply their skills to problem-solving through activities. Indicator 15.03 turns participants' attention to the issue of making decisions. Several steps and processes are discusses. Indicator 15.04 provides various activities to help participants develop their personal plans for making decisions and solving problems. Indicator 15.05 asks participants to plan for the obstacles that surely will crop up. Finally, Indicator 15.06 asks instructors and participants to discuss resources and strategies to overcome obstacles and roadblocks.

Competency 15.0: Skills to make appropriate and realistic decisions

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
15.01	Identify problem-solving models	Discussion	*Choosing a Strategy*
15.02	Apply critical thinking to personal problem-solving	Activity	*Problem Solving Rating Sheet*
15.03	Identify decision-making models	Discussion	*Steps in the Decision-Making Process*
		Discussion	*Decision-Making Rationale and Principles*
15.04	Develop an individual decision-making and problem-solving action plan	Discussion	*Ten Steps to Making a Decision*
		Activity	*A Decision-Making Exercise*
		Activity	*Decide to Decide*
		Activity	*Decision Making*
15.05	Identify roadblocks to achieving one's plan	Activity	*Facing Obstacles: An Action Plan*
15.06	Identify resources and strategies to overcome roadblocks	Discussion	*Instructor may choose to invite guest speakers*

Resources

Bolles, Richard Nelson. (1976). What color is your parachute? A practical manual for job-hunters and career changers. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Campbell, David. (1974). If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else. Niles, IL: Argus Communications.

Lakein, Alan. (1989). How to get control of your time and your life. New York: New American Library.

Choosing a Strategy

Since there are three alternative strategies for making a decision -- and each has its own advantages and disadvantages -- the first task in making a decision is to decide which strategy to use.

Dependent Decision Strategy

The **dependent decision** strategy may appear to be the easiest; we've certainly had the most time to practice it! All we need to do is defer the choice to others, to let someone else decide. In a situation where the outcome is of little personal importance, this approach can save time and energy. If you're like most of us, many of your dependent decisions are made in the spirit of compromise, as in the case of participating in a group decision. There are also situations that may call for a more informed dependent choice. If your doctor recommends surgery, for example, you may wish to get a second opinion or have the reasons carefully explained. Knowing that you don't have enough information to make the final decision, you may at least depend partially upon your doctor's judgment.

A dependent decision can be self-defeating and produce unhappy results if it is used to avoid the work of exploring or the fear of making a choice on your own. Deferring a choice whose outcome is important out of fear or indecision does not help us to avoid the problem; it only means the decision will be out of our control, and will be made by others or by circumstances. The results will affect our lives just as if we had made the choice; even if we have transferred the decision elsewhere, the responsibility for coping with the results will still be ours.

Intuitive Decision Strategy

Decision makers who use the **intuitive decision** process rely on "gut-level" reaction; they check out their

Reprinted from *Curriculum Manual for Career Planning* by permission of Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, Wisconsin.

internal signals to see if something feels good. Intuitive decisions are usually made spontaneously and below one's level of awareness. Consequently, they take little time, data gathering, or conscious planning. They are useful in situations where time is at a premium, such as emergencies or unforeseen opportunities. Intuition often helps us in interpersonal relations, where factual data about the other person's reaction are not available. When used appropriately, intuition can help us retain both authority and responsibility in a difficult decision situation.

Intuitive decisions, however, can also have uncomfortable results if used as a substitute for or to avoid gathering needed information. In situations that are emotional or very important, intuitive hunches are sometimes hard to distinguish from wishful thinking or personal bias. If information and time to review a decision are available, it is usually wise to take advantage of them. After exploring, however, intuition or feeling may still play a part in the final decision. Intuition enjoys a better reputation now than in the past since we realize that hunches may really be perceptions based on information that is taken in over time but not consciously remembered. Nevertheless, it is probably wiser not to decide something on the basis of intuition alone, if there is other information available.

Planful Decision Strategy

The third strategy, the **planful decision** approach, involves exploration of our needs and the environment, and a rational weighing of the various alternatives, costs, and benefits. The pace of this approach is slower than others, but allows maximum time for data gathering, exploring, and experimenting. Questions can be raised and answered, and attention paid to details. These questions will help us anticipate possible problems, and increase smoothness and efficiency of implementation. This approach does not exclude consideration of personal feelings about the choices (intuition) or the opinions of experts and loved ones (dependency), nor does it intend to exclude personal and idiosyncratic decision strategies.

Because the planful approach to decisions can consume a great deal of time and energy, it is not always appropriate. Many decisions are not important enough to be worth this amount of effort, and sometimes needed information is not available. Another problem is that in any situation the data is never all in, and waiting for everything we need to know can be a way of delaying a decision. Finally, anyone who takes this decision style literally runs the risk of making a totally rational or totally independent decision, which may not reflect reality, since our feelings and the opinions of significant others are important to us.

Ideally, a balanced decision will include elements of all three decisions styles. Such a choice would consider information available from internal and external sources, weigh the validity of that information, and invest time in further exploration if it seems necessary. A productive decision will usually take into account whatever information one can marshall in the circumstances about self, others, and the environment.

Problem Solving Rating Sheet

I. State the Problem

I must decide: ______________________________

II. List Your Options

1. ______
2. ______
3. ______
4. ______

A. Amount of personal satisfaction	1. ______	2. ______	3. ______	4. ______
B. Cost in $	______	______	______	______
C. Cost in amount of time	______	______	______	______
D. Amount of emotional stress	______	______	______	______
E. How pleasing is the outcome likely to be?	______	______	______	______
F. Other ______________	______	______	______	______
Totals:	______	______	______	______

III. Evaluate Your Highest Total:

0 = Does Not Apply

1 = Lowest Rating (very costly)

10 = Highest Rating (very satisfying)

Reprinted by permission of the Career Planning Center, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Steps in the Decision-Making Process

1. **Values Clarification**—assessing what qualities are of greatest worth to the individual (freedom, wealth, family, faith in God, integrity, etc.).
2. **Setting Objectives**—identifying the goal the individual wishes to reach in making the decision; what outcome is desired?
3. **Listing Alternatives**—mentally and/or physically identifying *all* possible choices of action; then sorting these alternatives into acceptable and unacceptable categories based upon the individual's values.
4. **Gathering Information**—identifying and seeking information concerning alternatives from a variety of sources; which can include professionals, written materials, friends, personal experiences, etc. This step may result in additional alternatives which must be considered.
5. **Applying Strategy**—putting all of the previous steps together to reach a tentative decision. Then the individual must weigh this decision against the:
   a. Risks—assessing risks the individual is willing to take to reach a goal.
   b. Consequences—accepting the consequences of the decision.

At this point, the final decision has been made.

Reprinted from *Focus on the Future: Career Decision Making for Women*, 1980, by permission of the Moorhead Technical Institute, Moorhead, Minnesota.

Decision-Making Rationale and Principles

Decision-making can be defined as a process in which a person selects from two or more possible choices. A decision does not exist unless there is more than one course of action, alternative or possibility to consider. If a choice exists, the process of deciding may be used. The process requires skills that can be learned, applied, and evaluated. In decision-making, a person needs to think about his/her personal values. Two individuals may face a similar decision, but each person is different and may place different values on outcomes.

Limitations in Decision-Making

1. Each decision is limited by what a person is capable of doing.
2. Decisions are limited by what a person is willing to do.
3. Decisions may be limited by the environment.
4. Lack of knowledge of personal values and lack of decision-making skills restrict or limit the decisions that can be made with satisfaction.

Three Major Requirements of Skillful Decision-Making Are:

1. Examination and recognition of personal **values**.
2. Knowledge and use of adequate, relevant **information**.
3. Knowledge and use of an effective **strategy** for converting this information into an action.

Decision-Making Process

1. What is your problem?
2. What are your choices?
3. Think about your choices:
    - possible alternative actions
    - possible outcomes or consequences or various actions
    - probability of outcomes or relationship between action and outcomes
    - desirability of outcomes
4. Make your choice.
5. Take responsibility for your decision.

Reprinted from *Single Parent/Homemaker Training for Life Skills Handbook: Final Report* by permission of the Kentucky Department for Adult and Technical Education, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Decision-Making Strategies

Determine your primary decision-making strategies:

Wish Strategy:	Choice of the alternative that could lead to the most desirable result, regardless of risk.
Escape Strategy:	Choice of the alternative that is most likely to avoid the worst possible result. Involves little risk.
Safe Strategy:	Choice of the alternative that is most likely to bring success; has the highest probability.
Combination Strategy:	Choice of the alternative that has both high probability and high desirability. Best strategy.
Impulsive:	Little thought, taking the first alternative, "don't look before you leap."
Fatalistic:	Letting the environment decide, leaving it up to fate.
Compliant:	Let someone else decide, following someone else's plans.
Delaying:	Taking a moratorium, postponing thought and action, cross that bridge later.
Agonizing:	Getting all lost in the data, overwhelmed with analyzing alternatives.
Planning:	Use a procedure so that the end result is satisfying. (decision-making process)
Intuitive:	A mystical, preconscious choice, based on inner harmony. It feels right.
Paralytic:	The decider accepts responsibility but is unable to approach it. "Can't face up to it." Decides but cannot carry through.

10 Steps to Making a Decision

1. State the decision you need to make.
2. Identify the problem or need.
3. State the outcome you want.
4. Identify any resources concerning the decision.
5. What are your alternative choices?
6. Weigh your alternatives.
7. Make a decision.
8. What action will you take?
9. Evaluate your decision.
10. Evaluate the steps and the process you used to make your decision.

Reprinted from A. Frances Lindner, *Life Skills Workbook: A Guide to Personal Growth,* 1987, Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

A Decision Making Exercise

Think of an important decision that you need to make. Use each of the steps below to guide your decision-making process. Do each step, one at a time, in the order they appear. Be sure to record all the information at each step as soon as the step has been completed.

1. **State the decision you need to make.** Write down a clear description of the decision. Make it a brief statement.

2. **Identify the problems about the decision.** Write down your concerns about the decision. Identify the factors that make it a difficult decision.

3. **State the outcome you want.** Think about this clearly and carefully. You need to know the possible consequences of your decision. What will be the result or effect of your decision (both on you and on your child)? Write down what you want from this decision. To do this you need to think about what's important to you and what you are willing to give up. Knowing yourself and your personal values will help with this. Your decision should be made according to your values.

Reprinted from A. Frances Lindner, *Life Skills Workbook: A Guide to Personal Growth*, 1987, Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

4. **What are your resources?** What resources do you have available to help you make your decision? A resource would be a person or place where you can get more information or help with your decision. For example, your family would be a good resource because they know you well. Ask for their advice but be sure to make the decision yourself, based on all the facts and information you find.

5. **What are your alternative choices?** What are other possible solutions or choices? An alternative is something you can do instead of, or in addition to, the first choice you have. Alternatives give you more than one way of looking at the problem and of choosing. After you have checked with all sources of information about your decision, list all the alternatives and choices you see as possibilities. Write down even those that seem silly. You may get ideas from them later.

6. **Weigh your alternatives.** Look at the list and predict what might be the positive and negative factors of each choice. Decide which ones are best for you. Then write the list again, ordering the best choices first and the less desirable choices last.

Positive Factors

Negative Factors

7. **Make a decision. Choose one alternative.** Decide from the choices you have listed which will give the best outcome for you.

8. **What action will you take?** Now that you have made a decision, act on it. Do what you have decided to do. Write down what action you will take to follow through on your decision.

9. **Evaluate your decision.** How do you feel about the decision you made? After you have acted on your decision, evaluate whether you made the best possible decision or if you might have made a better one.

10. **Evaluate the steps and the process you used to make your decision.** Was this the best way for you to make a decision? Are there things you might have done that would be helpful to organizing and acting on your decision-making style? Write down other steps you might include in making the next important decision.

This is only one method for making decisions. You can find out about other ways by talking to people, reading books on decision making, and trying ideas that might work better for you.

Each person is different and may have a way that works best for her or him. The important thing to remember about making decisions is to be organized about it, and to be clear about the decision and choices facing you.

Decide to Decide

A. Steps in the Decision-Making Process

Identify a decision you need to make and answer the following questions. Use the back of the page if you need more space.

1. What is the problem? Or what is the desired outcome?
2. What information do I have or need?
3. What are possible solutions or alternatives?
   a.

   b.

   c.
4. What are possible outcomes of the pros and cons of each alternative?
   a.

   b.

   c.
5. Which alternative will I choose?
6. How will I implement this decision?
7. How will I review or evaluate the outcomes of my decision?

B. Truths in the Decision-Making Process

1. Am I *aware* of my behavior, values, style? Yes No
2. Have I acknowledged factors beyond my control? Yes No
3. What risks are involved? ______________________
4. Did I exercise my freedom to choose between alternatives? Yes No
5. Did I act responsibly? Yes No
6. Did I consider the impact of the alternatives on myself and others? Yes No

C Criteria for Judging Decisions

1. Did the alternative chosen have the highest probability coupled with the highest desirability? Yes No
2. Was the alternative selected consistant with my values? Yes No
3. Am I willing to assume personal responsibility for the decision? Yes No

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Decision Making

Possible Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages	Internal Barriers	External Barriers

Directions:
1. Clarify decision
2. List all possible solutions
3. List advantages, disadvantages, internal and external barriers to each possible solution
4. Gain new information and locate resources as needed
5. Make decision!

Reprinted by permission of the Career Planning Center, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Facing Obstacles: An Action Plan

Select a goal or objective and follow the outline below to identify any obstacles involved and develop a plan for overcoming the obstacles.

Objective/goals:

Obstacles:

Actions to remove/minimize obstacles:

The obstacle will be removed when:

Starting time:

Completion time:

Likelihood of reaching goal:

Importance of reaching goal:

Reprinted from *Career Smart: Curriculum Guide for Making Smart and Healthy Decisions*, April, 1987, by permission of the Minnesota Curriculum Services Center, Little Canada, Minnesota.

Competency 16.0

Skills to access role models/mentors

16.01 Define mentoring.
16.02 Identify the benefits of a mentoring relationship.
16.03 Identify potential mentors.
16.04 Demonstrate confidence on asking for support, information and assistance.

Competency 16.0
Overview

Mentoring relationships are recognized as being invaluable keys to success. Mentors can provide knowledge, encouragement and support. Talking with a role model or mentor can help women understand what is expected of them in certain workplace situations, and can help women decide what career path to choose.

This Competency helps participants understand mentoring relationships and encourages participants to seek out effective mentoring relationships. Participants completing Competency 16.0: Skills to Access Role Models and Mentors will be able to:

16.01 Define mentoring
16.02 Identify the benefits of a mentoring relationship
16.03 Identify potential mentors
16.04 Demonstrate confidence in asking for support, information and assistance

In Indicator 16.01, instructors discuss the concept of mentoring with participants. In Indicator 16.02, through lecture and discussion, participants learn about the benefits and pitfalls of mentoring relationships. Indicator 16.03 asks participants to begin identifying potential mentors. One activity provided suggests participating in a "Job Shadowing" technique. Job Shadowing is a type of short-term mentoring that gives participants first-hand knowledge and information about potential careers. The Job Shadowing experience may lead participants to future mentors. The Activity Sheets in Indicator 16.04 suggest questions that might be asked of a mentor.

Competency 16.0: Skills to access role models and mentors

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
16.01	Define mentoring	Discussion	*What Is a Mentor?*
		Lecture; discussion	*What It Means To Be Mentored (note accompanying overhead)*
16.02	Identify the benefits of a mentoring relationship	Lecture; discussion	*Benefits of Being Mentored*
		Lecture; discussion	*Let a Mentor Lead You—But Beware the Pitfalls*
16.03	Identify potential mentors	Activity	*Job Shadowing*
16.04	Demonstrate confidence in asking for support, information and assistance	Activity	*What's What and Who's Who*
		Activity	*Question for Your Mentor: What Do You Do In Your Job?*
		Activity	*Question for Your Mentor: What Is Your Work Like?*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
16.04 (continued)	Activity	*Question for Your Mentor: What Is the Future for This Type of Occupation?*
	Activity	*Question for Your Mentor: How Did You Get Into This Job?*
	Activity	*Question for Your Mentor: How Do You Feel About This Job?*
	Activity	*Question for Your Mentor: How Does This Job Affect Your Personal Life?*

What Is a Mentor?

MENTOR n.

A wise and trusted counselor or teacher, tutor, coach; a wise adviser

What Does a Mentor Do?

A mentor is a mature, experienced person who helps you take steps towards being all that you can be.

A mentor will share knowledge and exchange ideas with you. By visiting her several times, you will learn ways to act, talk, and dress that are appropriate for the workplace.

By sharing her experiences and success with you, a mentor will serve as a role model as you prepare to enter or advance in the world of work.

How Can a Mentor Help You?

A mentor can show how your interests, your beliefs, the abilities you have, and those you wish to learn work together to help you make career decisions.

A mentor is an experienced friend to whom you can turn with questions and problems related to school and work.

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

What It Means To Be Mentored

In recent years, the age-old concept of mentoring has become extremely popular, and its application has been extended across many professional roles.

My personal definition of a mentor is simply someone who is always there for collegial support, but not dependency. It is through interaction within a positive working relationship that proteges are encouraged to achieve their personal and professional goals.

x

Expectations of Mentors

Reflecting on my past and present mentoring experiences, I feel that there are many essential characteristics that help to build a positive collegial mentoring relationship. Generally, some of my personal expectations are that a mentorship should feature availability, open lines of communication, demonstration of administrative expertise, the allocation of sufficient time, attention to the clarification of job expectations, and the provision of spiritual support.

- ***Availability***
  The fact that my mentor has been accessible at any time to help me through many difficult situations and clarify many pressing concerns and questions has always been quite comforting and reassuring. To realize that there is someone I can depend on to give me the "straight scoop" and help me to "learn the ropes" has helped me to build my levels of confidence as well as my competence.

- ***Open channels of communication***
  These are essential in building and maintaining a positive working relationship. There must be a high level of honesty and directness from the mentor if the relationship is to provide sound learning experiences along with creating conditions needed by the protege to achieve a

Reprinted from Marsha A. Playko, "What it means to be mentored," *NASSP Bulletin*, Vol. 74, No. 526, May 1990, by permission of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

degree of success. At the same time, the mentor needs to be responsive to the protege's needs, special abilities, concerns, questions, and newly-discovered realities. Incorporating positive human relations skills within mentoring should be the foundation upon which the relationship can be created and developed.

- ***Administrative expertise***
  The protege goes to the mentor with the expectation that the mentor will not only know how to do things, but more important, how to do things right. Previous experience as an administrator is important, but not nearly as important as demonstrating great expertise in a role.

- ***Time***
  Time is a precious commodity for every individual. The protege needs a few minutes here or there, and sometimes even more time to share and discuss concerns that arise. Time to sit, listen, and reflect on a protege's problems is a big responsibility that demands great commitment by the mentor.

- ***Clarification on the expectations of the job***
  Proteges experience conflict in terms of trying to understand what a job will be like before they ever get there. Mentors need to help proteges overcome the reality shock experienced in a new position.

- ***Spiritual support***
  It is reassuring to have a person believe in you so strongly that you feel as if you can do no wrong. It raises your level of confidence and competence at the same time. Many hesitations and anxieties are created when a protege enters unfamiliar territory or takes a new professional role. However, support should not be confused with the creation of dependency.

  Mentors must provide assistance to enable proteges to explore, understand, and take action for themselves, not to build a safety net to protect them from any chance of failure. In short, mentors must allow proteges the opportunity to determine their own direction and mode of learning, and make their own decisions regarding how they might use what they have learned.

Characteristics of Mentor-Protege Relationship
In developing a trusting, working relationship, mentors and proteges will encounter both good and bad times when the relationship will be tested. A major task for both proteges and mentors is declaring a commitment to maintaining, improving, and continuing the partnership so that both participants can reap the available personal and professional benefits.

Many building blocks go into the creation of a strong, positive, trusting, and working mentor-protege relationship. In general, the pairings must be valued by both participants. They must find the arrangement equally valuable and important that will serve as an opportunity for the mentor and protege to participate in a supportive setting.

The relationship should indicate a mutuality that is warmly regarded by both parties in terms of trust and respect. Kram (1985) described ideal mentoring as a "mutually-enhancing process where the career development of both parties is addressed." This conceptualization emphasizes that true mentoring has the potential of being as helpful to the mentor as it is to the protege.

Mentoring should be characterized as two-way, interactive activity. It should be incorporated in a risk-free environment where both the mentor and the protege are encouraged to express inner feelings, thoughts, and questions regarding their professional role or personal problems that they may wish to share. In essence, this can be viewed as a shared and expressive learning experience for both participants who sit, listen, and reflect on situations (past and present) to help each other in formulating available options or directions that can be pursued in resolving problems. All this is made possible through a variety of interactive collegial decision-making processes.

Finally, a mentoring relationship should serve as a form of motivation for both the mentor and the protege in that it will stimulate a desire for both to grow personally and professionally. Within a caring and trusting relationship, both parties should be able to view each other as colleagues who can offer new insights and possible solutions to arising problems. The value of the relationship should center around the fact that there is someone who is available, dependable, honest, sincere, trusting, and willing to provide true collegial support. A major component of the relationship must be ongoing collaboration that will enable participants to continue to learn, observe, and reflect.

Reference

Kram, Kathy E. *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life.* Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1985.

Expectations of Mentors

- Availability
- Open channels of communication
- Administrative expertise
- Time
- Clarification on the expectations of the job
- Spiritual support

Reprinted from Marsha A. Playko, "What it means to be mentored," *NASSP Bulletin*, Vol. 74, No. 526, May 1990, by permission of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Benefits of Being Mentored

There were five areas in which I felt I benefited from a mentor-protege relationship. They were gaining confidence and competence, blending theory with practice, developing communication skills, learning the tricks of the trade, and building a collegial network.

- ***Confidence and competence***

As a rookie entering a new professional role, I felt there was so much more that I needed to understand, and at the same time, I felt that I lacked the ability to perform the necessary tasks for my position. Many proteges may question their abilities during their transition from one role to another. It is important for the mentor to provide support and guidance to help ensure the protege's successful transition.

Many times the competence is there, but the confidence must be encouraged and reinforced. As a protege, I learned how and what questions to ask as a way to establish a sense of direction relating to the expectations of my new professional role. At the same time, I was fortunate to have a mentor who was able to ask the right questions, and who did not just try to provide all the right answers.

- ***Blending theory with practice***

A mentor should stress to the protege that learning about a career does not just take place on the university campus. However, the protege's ability to blend the theory acquired through academic preparation experiences into practice in a new position can be strengthened when a seasoned mentor helps to guide and influence the work of the protege.

- ***Communication skills***

The way you write and the way you present yourself says much about you as a person. The

Reprinted from Marsha A. Playko, "What it means to be mentored," *NASSP Bulletin*, Vol. 74, No. 526, May 1990, by permission of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

mentor can help the protege display a strong, positive image to others, while fine tuning those areas that need improvement.

- ***Tricks of the trade***

When proteges move from the academic preparation phase of professional development to field-based learning experiences, it is essential that they begin to learn some of the tricks of the trade if they are to survive. These would include proven techniques and strategies that mentors have utilized successfully in different situations. The protege can borrow from the strategies to begin to build a personalized bag of tricks. Carbon copy responses are rarely effective.

Learning the tricks of the trade also involves knowing how to function in the political world. Knowing what to do and following formal guidelines, policies, or procedures is different from knowing the real story concerning the who, what, or how of certain situations. Proteges want to be successful and conform to stated guidelines, but success is often defined as the ability to understand the way things really work.

In conclusion, mentoring is a way that one person is able to say to another that he or she is "worth it," and that he or she may succeed. What could be of greater value than that?

Let a Mentor Lead You—But Beware the Pitfalls

Just a few years ago, the idea of having a mentor to provide career advice was as hot as owning a pet rock. Fast-trackers pored over articles about the benefits of "mentoring." And some corporations even launched formal programs to encourage apprenticeships as a method of executive development.

Now that the furor has faded, was mentoring merely a fad? Hardly. It makes sense to have someone around who takes a personal interest in your career and offers unbiased counsel and help. "The risks of having a mentor far outweigh the risk of not having one," says Wesley Poriotis, a headhunter with Wesley, Brown and Bartle.

Still, there are risks to keep in mind if you become the protégé of someone older and more experienced. Should your mentor grow overly reliant on you as a well-trained and capable assistant, for example, he or she might hold you back from getting a transfer or promotion. Or, if you align yourself too closely with a mentor who later falls into disfavor, your position could be at risk, too. And some protégés get so friendly with their mentors they start to coast, which can lead to a mentor-delivered pink slip.

"Godlike Figure"

The risks can be reduced, however, by following a few rules. Don't rely on the classic one-on-one relationship. It's unrealistic to think that there's one "right" person to guide your career, says Kathy Kram, a Boston University professor. "That's like searching for the perfect mate or the godlike figure who can take care of all your needs."

Instead of forging one intimate friendship, build a number of supportive work relationships. That way, if a single mentor should be cut loose during a reorganization, you won't be as vulnerable as you would with only one.

Reprinted from the April 20, 1987 issue of *Business Week* by permission. © 1987 by McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Also look to establish mentor relationships with peers who may be grappling with the same issues and problems that you are currently encountering. These linkups tend to be best when peers work in different, noncompeting departments.

Finally, do not view mentoring as something that's needed only to help you get started up the corporate ladder. "At every stage of life and career," says Kram, "there are new dilemmas to be managed. Whether it's dealing with midlife plateauing or early retirement, the issues may change along the line, but the need for other people to help you sort them out and find answers never goes away."

Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is one of the best ways to learn about a new job. In job shadowing, you spend the day (or part of a day) with someone who works in a field that you find interesting.

By job shadowing, you can discover what a typical day on the job is like. You also have the opportunity to ask questions. Some questions can be answered as you watch and learn. Other questions can be answered by the person you are shadowing. Try to find a female in your fields of interest to shadow.

Use the following section to collect information as your job shadow.

Field 1: Job Title ______________________________

What does someone in this job do all day? ______________________________

____

____

What is the working environment like? ______________________________

____

____

What training (or education) do I need for this job? ______________________________

____

____

What are the best parts of this job? ______________________________

____

____

What are the drawbacks of this job? ______________________________

____

____

What advice would you give someone wanting to enter this field? __________

____

____

Other notes about the job: ______________________________

____

____

Reprinted from Margaret A. Nash, *Exploring New Worlds: Trades and Technical Occupations for Women*, 1991, Vocational Studies Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Field 2: Job Title ______________________________

What does someone in this job do all day? ______________________________

____

____

What is the working environment like? ______________________________

____

____

What training (or education) do I need for this job? ______________________________

____

____

What are the best parts of this job? ______________________________

____

____

What are the drawbacks of this job? ______________________________

____

____

What advice would you give someone wanting to enter this field? __________

____

____

Other notes about the job: ______________________________

____

____

What's What and Who's Who

A tour of your mentor's workplace will also be a good source of questions about her job and her kind of work. It may also cause you to talk about some of the other jobs that you may not have noticed or thought about.

Touring the workplace can be a formal or informal adventure; you and your mentor will have to decide. Take this worksheet with you as you tour and make notes about the following things:

1. What's the formal system like?
   - its primary purpose
   - its product
   - its service (if a service organization)
   - customers or clients
   - product or service
   - internal communication (e.g., newsletters, memorandums)
   - technology used, especially computers

2. What's the support system like?
   - clerical
   - accounting
   - mailroom
   - custodial
   - research
   - other (e.g., media/duplicating)

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

3. What is the informal system like?

   - What is considered appropriate attire? Does it differ for men and women? different job categories?
   - What do the "personal items" on desks and walls tell you about different people?
   - What "social functions" take place (e.g., breaks, group lunches) and where (e.g., in coffee room, in hallway)?

Question for Your Mentor: What Do You Do in Your Job?

Things to find out about:

- General job description
- Specific tasks and responsibilities
- Equipment and tools used
- What is produced

What else? (Here's your chance to add some of your own questions.)

Notes:

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

My thoughts and feelings about what my mentor says are . . .

Question for Your Mentor: What Is Your Work Like?

Things to find out about:

- Working hours (per day, per week)
- What a "typical day" is like
- Work environment (noise, hazards, indoor/outdoor, travel, special clothing or uniforms)
- How this job fits into the total organization
- Unions and professional organizations
- Salary range and fringe benefits

What else?

Notes:

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

My thoughts and feelings about what my mentor says are . . .

Question for Your Mentor: What Is the Future for This Type of Occupation?

Things to find out about:

- Opportunities for advancement
- Employment projections: equal opportunities regardless of sex or race
- Effects of technology on her work
- Effects of the country's economic condition on her job
- Hints she would give someone applying for her job
- Other jobs she could do with the same skills

What else?

____

____

____

____

____

____

Notes:

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

My thoughts and feelings about what my mentor says are . . .

Question for Your Mentor: How Did You Get Into This Job?

Things to find out about:

- How did she get started in this occupation?
- What other jobs has she held?
- What skills were developed from them?
- What personal qualities are needed for this job?
- What skills were developed from life experience rather than from jobs?
- How does this job or occupation fit into her lifetime goals (career? a steppingstone?)

What else?

Notes:

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

My thoughts and feelings about what my mentor says are . . .

Question for Your Mentor: How Do You Feel About This Job?

Things to find out about:

- What she likes and dislikes about the job
- What she would change if she could
- Avenues available to her for making suggestions on the job
- Interpersonal skills she finds most important and why
- Underlying attitudes and values important to her job
- Why she chose this type of work (with people instead of machines, for example)

What else?

Notes:

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

My thoughts and feelings about what my mentor says are . . .

Question for Your Mentor: How Does This Job Affect Your Personal Life?

Things to find out about:	What else?
- Family time - Leisure time - Job-related skills she uses elsewhere - Expanding interests - Adequate exercise - General health - Tension and fatigue versus stimulation, fulfillment, and increased energy	

Notes:

Reprinted with permission from Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, "Student Career Journal," *Hand in Hand: Mentoring Young Women*, Book 3 (Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center/Education Development Center, 1988).

My thoughts and feelings about what my mentor says are . . .

Competency 17.0

Attaining/enhancing basic academic skills

17.01 Identify common barriers to academic success.
17.02 Demonstrate skills in overcoming barriers.
17.03 Identify technical skill deficiencies.
17.04 Demonstrate skills in overcoming technical skill deficiencies.
17.05 Identify potential barriers to success in a nontraditional occupation.
17.06 Assess study skill deficiencies.
17.07 Identify and access resources for continuous study skills improvement.

Competency 17.0
Overview

For many women who are returning to the paid labor force, success in their new careers is dependent on success in school first. School can be an intimidating experience for anyone, let alone someone who has been out of school for years, or who did not enjoy school previously.

In addition, the "high-tech" world in which we now live can feel unfamiliar and frightening to many. Women, especially, have a tendency to have anxiety around math, computers and other areas. This Competency focuses on attaining basic academic skills in order to increase the likelihood of school and workplace success.

This Competency is not meant to be at all comprehensive. In fact, most community colleges and technical schools already have in place excellent resources for addressing these issues. Instructors should use the time available for this Competency to help participants assess their skills and their needs, and then point them in the direction of resources in the community and at the school that can help them further.

This Competency is designed to help participants assess their needs and locate community resources. It also is designed to help break down feelings of isolation, to help participants see any academic difficulties as normal and fixable, and to encourage participants to get the help they need. Participants completing Competency 17.0: Attaining/Enhancing Basic Academic Skills will be able to:

17.01 Identify common barriers to academic success
17.02 Demonstrate skills in overcoming barriers
17.03 Identify technical skill deficiencies
17.04 Demonstrate skills in overcoming technical skill deficiencies
17.05 Identify potential barriers to success in a nontraditional occupation
17.06 Assess study skill deficiencies
17.07 Identify and access resources for continuous study skills improvement

Indicator 17.01 helps participants recognize that they are not alone in whatever academic problems they may be having. Indicator 17.02 focuses on specific problems, such as computer phobia, math anxiety, technical competencies, test anxiety, and returning adult student syndrome. During the time allotted for Indicator 17.03, instructors can conduct assessments of technical skills. In Indicator 17.04, instructors can rely on already-existing local resources to help participants overcome the technical skill deficiencies identified in Indicator 17.03. Indicator 17.05 looks more closely at nontraditional occupations. Instructors are provided with information on why women often do not choose these occupations; discussion of this topic should conclude with ways to overcome barriers. The final two Indicators, 17.06 and 17.07 focus specifically on study skills. Again, instructors can conduct assessments of participants' current study skills, and then rely on local resources for ways to improve study skills.

Competency 17.0: Attaining/enhancing basic academic skills

Indicator and Content		Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
17.01	Identify common barriers to academic success	Activity; journalling; discussion	*The Journal in the Classroom: A Tool for Discovery*
17.02	Demonstrate skills in overcoming barriers	Lecture; discussion	*Math Anxiety in Adult Learning*
		Lecture; discussion	*Problem-Solving—An Attitude as well as a Strategy*
		Discussion	*Test-Taking Made Easy . . . Well, Easier*
17.03	Identify technical skill deficiencies	Discussion; activities	*Instructor-generated materials*
17.04	Demonstrate skills in overcoming technical skill deficiencies	Discussion; activities	*Instructor-generated materials*
17.05	Identify potential barriers to success in a nontraditional occupation	Discussion	*Why Some Women Do Not Enter Nontraditional Occupations (note accompanying Overhead)*
17.06	Assess study skill deficiencies	Activity	*Study Distractions Analysis*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
17.06 (continued)	Lecture; discussion	*Learning Styles and Individual Differences in Learning*
17.07 Identify and access resources for continuous study skills improvement	Discussion	*Study Schedule Hints (note accompanying Overhead)*

Resources

Brown, Susan C. (1989). Developing math learning skills. Newton, MA: WEEA Publishing Center.

Burns, Marilyn. (1975). The I hate mathematics! book. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co.

Dahlstrom, Harry. (1987). Study skills. Franklin, MA: Dahlstrom and Co., Inc.

Digilio, Karen S. (1989). Critical thinking with math. Chicago, IL: Contemporary Books.

Handler, Janet. (Feb. 1990). Math anxiety in adult learning. Adult Learning,

Hilton, Peter, and Pedersen, Jean. (1983). Fear no more: An adult approach to mathematics. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc.

Kogelman, Stanley, and Warren, Joseph. (1979). Mind over math: Put yourself on the road to success by freeing yourself from math anxiety. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Mitchell, Robert. (1991). Calculator power. Chicago, IL: Contemporary Books.

Morical, Lee. (1984). Where's my happy ending. Redding, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Paulos, John Allen. (1991). Beyond Numeracy. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Paulos, John Allen. (1989). Innumeracy: Mathematical illiteracy and its consequences. New York: Hill and Wang, Inc.

Public Films, Inc. (1988). "Math! A Four Letter Word" (Video). Rt. 1, Box 282-E4J, Wimberly, TX 78676.

Sembera, Angela and Hovis, Michael. (1990). Math! A four letter word. Wimberly, TX: The Wimberly Press.

Tobias, Sheila. (1980). Overcoming math anxiety. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Tobias, Sheila. (1990). Succeed with math. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Transitions. (1991). Salem, OR: The National Association of Returning Students. [Note: To order this newsletter, write to NARS at P.O. Box 3283, Salem, OR, 97302. In 1991, a one-year subscription cost $32.]

The Journal in the Classroom: A Tool for Discovery

When I first began assigning journals, my intention was solely to use them as a vehicle for improving student writing. Subsequent analysis has convinced me that the use of journals provides additional benefits to both students and teachers. In addition, journal writing can be readily implemented in courses within a variety of disciplines, in both non-traditional or traditional programs.

While I have used journal writing assignments in graduate and undergraduate settings, I want to focus on the latter. The undergraduate setting was a required, introductory course of the University Without Walls (UWW) program, a non-traditional degree program of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The program currently serves 300 men and women from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, mostly older students with work and family responsibilities that enrich and complicate their college learning. The student body is 12 percent minority and 63 percent female.

The implicit contract between these students and UWW is that academic learning must be integrated with the practical knowledge and experience of the learner. One informs the other; both are valuable and valued. UWW students collaborate with the faculty in the design of their "majors" or areas of concentration, and they receive credit for important learning done outside the classroom. A small number of students is admitted with limited college experience, but most begin the program with 40 to 75 transfer credits, earn between 15 and 30 credits through the prior assessment process, and complete the program in three to five semesters.

In their first semester, all students enroll in two courses that are designed to re-orient them to

Reprinted from Kevin F. Grennan, "The Journal in the Classroom: A Tool for Discovery," *Equity and Excellence,* Vol. 23, No. 3 by permission of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA.

college learning, introduce key ideas, and combat the sense of isolation and confusion that adult learners frequently experience on a campus that they perceive as dedicated to the needs of primarily residential, traditional undergraduates.

In the "Degree Development Seminar," students examine the relationship between schooling and career advancement, familiarize themselves with the resources of the University and other community agencies, begin to balance their experience with theory, and to broaden the scope of their degree program beyond the concerns of a single professional role.

However, I shall be focusing on the second course—"Perspectives on Learning." In this course, we consider how family, school, and community experiences influence values, and how our cultural biases limit our seeing and hearing the world around us. Readings in fiction, autobiography, social science, and philosophy provide bases for much of our discussions, and assignments encourage students to read critically and write analytically. We examine the relationships between learning and formal education, between mere opinion and informed opinion, between cultural diversity and learning, and between the students' work and other experiences and their present learning.

The faculty uses the Perspectives course to cultivate:

- the ability to state a thesis and ably defend it; and
- a sense of what it means to be a critical and active reader, an able writer, and a member in a community of scholars.

We attempt to do this through class discussions in which participation is strongly encouraged and supported, through writing assignments (usually three papers), and by having the students keep a journal and make a class presentation on how their cultural background has affected their attitudes toward work and education.

The responses to a 1984 UWW survey of student attitudes toward their first semester followed a clear pattern:

> two positive words testifying to the intensity of the experience, qualified (or perhaps intensified) by one adjective confessing anxiety or frustration: e.g.:
>
> - "challenging—enlightening—stressful,"
> - "fulfilling—stimulating—difficult," or
> - "frustrating—rewarding—demanding."
>
> The responses were surprisingly consistent. [Jacoby, 1984]

From the teacher's perspective, it's a little different; one member of the UWW faculty, in a manner reminiscent of Postman and Weingartner's 1969 book, *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, describes the first semester as an attempt

> to unform and then to reform; to get you underway by first knocking you off your tracks . . . . But the motives are practical not ideological, the approach supportive rather than confrontational. [Hendra, 1984]

In my own experience, journals contributed powerfully to whatever success we achieve in any of those areas.

The Course

Before teaching in UWW, my co-teacher and I agreed on the following reasons for assigning journals:

- to provide older learners with a less-formal, and hence less-threatening way to write in a course;
- to get some students to "talk" about the assignments who would not necessarily do so in a classroom setting;
- to discover, through their journal entries, new or less guarded and less formal reasons for students' attending the University, this particular program, and for making other changes in their lives.

All of this was predicated on the journal being used as a supplement, rather than as an alternative to the traditional writing requirements. Further, it was clearly assumed that keeping a journal, while not a spontaneous or natural act, was in fact a form of writing that would be seen as less difficult by students who, by and large, were extremely diffident about their writing abilities and about demonstrating their perceived inadequacies in formal written assignments.

That first semester, and in each succeeding one, we have asked students to commit themselves to a minimum of two entries per week in a journal or "learning log." They are asked to make a readable and honest attempt to comment on issues raised in the assigned readings and in the class; they are also encouraged to talk about their experiences as a returning or new student. The journals are handed in, read, and returned at least three times in the course of the semester with comments from both co-teachers in the margins or at the end of the entries.

I am still somewhat surprised by the anxiety this theoretically non-threatening requirement arouses, even after we assure students that we will not be grading their entries. Much of this resistance seems connected to the general reluctance to commit one's self to paper, to expose the workings of one's mind; however, much is also connected to the very open-endedness of the journal assignment. I have responded to this by pointing out that the journal is, among other things, the student's record of his or her first semester in UWW and, as such, becomes a kind of stage on which the private as well as the academic person can sing, play, emote, and even cry. I tell students on that first night that poetry or pictures may at times be more communicative than prose; the critical point is for the student to reflect on the issues we're raising in class and use whatever voice is most appropriate.

When I received my first batch of journal entries, I was struck by something I should have anticipated, but had not. Wading through 20 spiral notebooks with handwritten entries of varying lengths, sophistication, and intensity, I was impressed by clearly identifiable themes that were present and common to them all. And in each succeeding semester, the journals I read continued to confirm those themes.

First, it was clear that none of the students really wanted to write about the readings (remember, we asked primarily for comments on issues raised in the readings and in class, and only secondarily for comments on experiences as a returning or new student). While students often did comment on specific readings, they clearly preferred to write about the experience of re-entry into the academy; that is, to discuss a personal, concrete dimension of their lives, rather than those abstract concepts we were reading and talking about in class.

That re-entry experience could be described in three broad categories:

- going-to-school issues (usually specific problems involved with campus);
- the class itself;
- personal and off-campus issues.

Table 1 displays some examples of each issue category gathered over four semesters from 90 students, and the approximate percentage of responses for each:

Table I

	Approximate Percentage
Going to School Issues	
Being an older student on a campus that suffers from a youth orientation	20
Frustration with campus bureaucracy	30
Juggling job/family/school	50
Fear of failure	30
Problems with parking, etc.	10-15

Table I (continued)

Classroom issues	
Reading load	70
Class diversity, sense of community	50
Anxiety over speaking in class	50
Writing: both general concerns and writing in the journal, itself	30
Personal issues	
Job issues and connections with this class	50
Sense of growth, challenge, new insights, etc.	80-100
Isolation, being alone in this venture	45

These broad categories and the specific clusterings of examples are shorthand, described arbitrarily by me. Of course, the real flavor is in the individual journals, and there is some variation each semester. For instance, in one class, nearly 30 percent of the first batch of journals cited the excessive seriousness of the authors or topics assigned, and usually concluded with a resolution by the student to be more playful.

Nevertheless, the patterns of concerns and the gestalt of a particular class were revealed in the journals, and this was an unanticipated outcome of the original assignment. What we had discovered was a formative evaluation of this course, individual student progress, and even of faculty behavior, carried by 20 resident experts midway through a creative process. Since both co-teachers tried to read and write comments in all journals, we were able to respond, when appropriate, to individual concerns, and to alter the course of the class when it was clear that we were missing the mark. We had a better sense of the learning cycle of each student and of the class. We could, and did, enter into an individual and collective dialogue that was impossible in the classroom.

Specifically, in a fashion we did not anticipate and could not discern in the classroom or in the regular papers, we were able to observe individual movement through something very like the stages described by Kolb: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. It was often possible for us to detect ongoing transitions from one stage to another, and to try to make appropriate adjustments in our presentations, questions, and feedback.

The very format of a journal encourages a different, more personal voice. This went beyond our attempts to alleviate students' concerns over writing in our first class meeting. The personal voice tended to reduce the number of comments about readings *per se* and promoted discussion of personal issues, such as the confusion, delight, and sorrow of being a student again. Also, this personal voice probably helped to reduce the barrier between "real" life (i.e., our personal, non-academic lives) and the artificial life of the academy.

At the same time, it allows and encourages the readers of those journals to respond in an empathetic, supportive, and non-authoritarian voice, as well. For most students, at least initially, the teacher is an authority figure. Most of us overcome this, some later rather than sooner, but the relationship established via the journal is different, and can be vital.

Conclusions

From that semester until the present, I have devoted a portion of the class period immediately following the first submission of the journals to a discussion of the entries. By using the categories I have identified above, I talk with students about their mutual senses of frustration, annoyance, anxiety, wonder, and growth. While each student before that moment may feel unique or even alone, and while that feeling is real and perhaps even necessary, it is important that they come to the realization that in fact they are not alone and that the class is indeed a community.

The first semester for new and returning students is a difficult one under the best of circumstances. For older students with families and jobs, it can be terminal, at least in the sense of their academic lives. The journal can be a source of security, a lifeline to the teacher, or a safety valve, a means of discovering meaning in the chaos of the social world; it is clearly an opportunity to integrate one's outside life and experience with the academic life and theory. In so doing, its use can promote a form of socialization of the individual to the norms of the academy, thus contributing to that person's success. Through the dialogue of the journal, we can clarify institutional goals, identify and reinforce the informal structures that support those goals, contribute to a sense of participation in a valued group experience, and provide feedback.

It can also open the door between faculty and student. The journals sensitize faculty to the complexity of the lives of non-traditional students, as well as to the individual timetables of learning amongst heterogeneous adults. Through written responses to individual entries, important and supportive feedback is provided to the students, contributing to their sense that their struggle is being empathetically observed and their work encouraged. In other words, they have an alternative and direct route of access to the classroom teacher.

Finally, the students themselves read their journals and out of that reading take heart. As one student last semester wrote, "You know, I like having a journal. When I write everything down, everything doesn't seem so bad."

References

Hendra, R. (1984). Strangers in a strange land: UWW and the first semester. *Update*, 6(1), 3-4.

Jacoby, V. (1984). Describing the challenge of the first semester in University Without Walls. *Update*, 6(1), 4-5.

Kolb, D. (1981). Learning styles and disciplinary differences, in A. Chickering, *et.al., The Modern American College*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Postman, N., and Weingartner, N. (1969). *Teaching as a subversive activity*. New York: Delacorte Press.

Progoff, I. (1975). *At a journal workshop*. New York: Dialogue House.

Math Anxiety in Adult Learning

As our national concern over mathematics and science performance increases, realization is growing that innumeracy (mathematical illiteracy) and scientific illiteracy are also serious problems for *adults* in our society. Lack of mathematical understanding affects personal decision making, career selection and advancement, and the ability to respond to changing workplace requirements.

Adults with widely varying educational and job profiles are finding themselves unable to cope effectively with the math they encounter in fairly standard computations or in more subtle forms like graphs, probabilities, or quality control statistics. (Paulos, 1988; Tobias, 1987) In order to help these individuals—whether through basic education, continuing education, or other instructional programs—it is vital to explore all factors that may be influencing mathematical "illiteracy." *Avoidance* is certainly a major factor above the elementary grades—but what lies behind this and what can be done about it?

Math anxiety, discussed off and on in the professional literature for several decades, deserves a fresh look—particularly in view of evidence that a distinct gender gap in math and science still emerges in the upper grades. Math anxiety may go unrecognized during school years, but a general unease may suddenly erupt into panic attacks or other anxiety reactions when, as an adult, math skills are being evaluated on the job, or when confronted with a math-related problem that cannot readily be solved.

Adult educators must actively seek ways to recognize and alleviate this anxiety, especially when it becomes chronic. Developments in related fields can be rich sources of ideas for tackling the problem. Recent studies in cognitive

Reprinted from Janet R. Handler, "Math Anxiety in Adult Learning," *Adult Learning,* April 1990, Vol. 1, No. 6 by permission of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, Washington, D.C.

psychology, for example, provide important insights into memory, problem solving, and thinking skills. By applying these areas to math anxiety, teachers can better understand how math anxiety influences adult learning.

Math Anxiety: State of the Art

Teachers and students have found it difficult to understand and deal with math anxiety. Prior research has shown that males and females differ in certain types of math performance, especially spatial abilities, and that enrollment in math classes is less common among females. However, research has not clearly shown how math anxiety contributes to these differences.

Newer findings suggest that men and women seem to be affected by math anxiety. (Holden, 1987) Fear of testing or evaluation may lie at the heart of the problem. In fact, the definition that best fits present evidence is that math anxiety represents an anxious state *induced by fear of failing when attempting to learn or to demonstrate one's learning of mathematics.* It results in a high level of emotional interference that can disrupt memory and logic. The anxious individual has trouble interpreting information, and may not be able to recall needed data or procedures. When these experiences occur regularly, the level of anxiety tends to rise and may lead to a frustrating cycle of failure and insecurity that can be hard to break.

Math anxiety has been attributed to a variety of sources, summarized by Tobias (1980) into five categories: myths associated with mathematics; out-of-class experiences; expectations; reading and language facility; and classroom stress. Being aware of these contributing factors can be useful, of course, in probing the roots of anxiety reactions. If you erroneously believe, for instance, that people who are skilled in mathematics can produce virtually instant solutions to problems, your own painstaking efforts are clearly likely to induce greater anxiety. If your classroom experiences with mathematics have been stressful, featuring timed tests, public displays, or critiques of solutions, and the elusive search for "right answers," you are likely to be anxious in your future math encounters.

Math anxiety remains a very real concern that merits further attention by adult educators. Its effects can range from fairly mild physiological and psychological discomfort to such high-impact consequences as dropping out of school or altering a career choice in order to avoid required math courses. Access to many jobs, with or without college-level training requirements, is sharply limited by math deficiencies. Even entry-level jobs may, with advancement, require substantial contact with such mathematically based supervisory or managerial activities as scheduling, forecasting, statistical reporting, and budgeting. In addition, having job-related, mathematical tasks performed by employees experiencing serious math anxiety has obvious implications for efficiency.

A Cognitive Process Approach

The 1989 *Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development* focuses on ways that current cognitive research can be used to strengthen educational programs. It provides an important perspective by showing how students can learn to be much more effective *thinkers* while acquiring the knowledge needed for success in the 21st century. (Resnick and Klopfer, 1989) Several of the yearbook's themes can be applied to the problem of math anxiety in adult learners. Four are developed here to highlight useful ways to help adults who are experiencing math anxiety.

1) Knowledge that works for you. Cognitive research has shown that *knowledge* is indeed, and not surprisingly, central to learning. Recent research has emphasized that this basic core of knowledge must be made *generative*—able to be freely called up and used to solve problems, to interpret new situations, and to think about experiences. Generative knowledge is *not* gained by passive learning, but grows from active and repeated use of new information or procedures to organize ideas, explain inconsistencies, and build relationships among ideas.

Adults who have been able to build generative knowledge, tested and applied in various situations, develop greater *confidence* in their ability to retrieve or reconstruct procedures or ideas as needed. Those who have simply been given information, without questioning it or looking at how it relates to other things they know, are typically less secure in their knowledge. They find that if any part of a procedure is forgotten, or if the new situation has somewhat different features than their "learned" model, success is unlikely—further confirming their personal sense of inadequacy. It now seems clear that these individuals are suffering consequences of non-generative learning.

Math-anxious individuals often use several coping strategies when called upon to learn or apply mathematical knowledge. They are not likely to reveal their "ignorance" by asking questions, especially in a public situation, and they frequently resort to memorization or rote use of a technique that has worked before. Throughout their school years, these coping strategies may have been rather successful, since textbooks tend to segregate exercises calling for specific techniques and since many teachers seldom deviate from this predictable, answer-driven approach.

Clearly, adult educators must use instructional strategies that favor the growth of generative, not static, knowledge. Teachers can help by providing opportunities to go back to the most basic underlying math concepts where needed. They can encourage students to work actively with concrete models, for example folding paper or creating patterns with tiles. Learners should be asked to test possible solutions. The important point is to create exercises that demand more of the student that just memorizing and reproducing steps of a solution. The goal of building generative knowledge requires the learner to practice thinking ahead, recognizing the actual problem, anticipating consequences, and seeing applications to other situations.

Examples that lend themselves especially well to this goal include consumer, household, or workplace math applications involving estimation, measurement, scheduling, or purchasing. In each case, a standard textbook problem can lead to a generative use of basic skills. The teacher can guide the learner in deciding whether a solution would be practical, thinking of other ways the problem could be solved, or evaluating whether the answer would still be true if the conditions of the problem were changed in some way.

Teaching that builds generative knowledge is admittedly "harder"—it takes more creative planning, demands more time, and requires a supportive working relationship between teacher and adult learner. It *is*, however, well worth the effort, having the potential to give math-anxious individuals greater confidence in their ability to use math in situations where they need it.

2) Joining skill and content. Cognitive research supports the joining of skills and content to strengthen learning. Mathematical concepts should be learned in close association with useful "thinking skills." While teaching area and perimeter, for example, the instructor should identify thinking skills that can be practiced with this topic, such as comparing, classifying, estimating, analyzing, or predicting.

Emphasizing reasoning and problem-solving skills pays off in greater success with the subject matter being learned. Mathematics is a content area filled with opportunities to use these skills meaningfully. A well-designed math program can help adults learn to give logical reasons, make inferences, recognize relationships, and generate alternative solutions.

Recent cognitive research makes it clear that individuals can acquire specific thinking skills that put solutions to both standard and non-standard math problems within reach. Steps must be taken, particularly with adults with self-defeating beliefs about mathematics, not only to provide extensive practice with the different thinking skills, but also to make very apparent to them any progress in this area. Many adults, especially those who have experienced failure and frustration in school, erroneously assume they are already as "smart" as they will ever be. This notion of being able to strengthen and expand one's repertoire of *thinking skills*—a much more powerful outcome than simply gaining additional knowledge to pass a proficiency or entrance test—deserves emphasis in its own right.

3) **Linking motivation to cognition.** Motivation is now being looked at as an integral part of thinking. Even our personal awareness of what or how we are thinking at a certain time, known as "metacognition," is unlikely to be activated if we don't feel *motivated* to do so.

Being motivated to learn generally requires that the outcome is valued and success seems within reach. People cannot be expected to invest the energy required to process information at the more sophisticated levels of thinking (such as analyzing, probing for logical errors, or developing alternatives) when they could "get by" with less in a situation lacking motivational appeal. Similarly, although metacognition can aid problem solving by keeping you aware of the thinking strategies being called into play, these interior "self-talks" are not likely to aid learning unless positive motivation is created.

Motivation has long been an important concern of adult educators. It remains a major challenge due to the complex factors that influence the typical adult's motivational state in regard to new educational experiences. For the math-anxious person, the impact of motivation is clearly even more daunting. Emotional interference occurs whenever that individual tries to think in mathematical terms. Where a long-term pattern of course failure is also present, the obstacles to success may truly appear formidable.

Top priority should be given to helping the math-anxious adult learner keep moving ahead and making progress. Teachers should provide strategies for continuing to think, write, and try even when the interior voice is shouting, *"Stop! You can't!"* Tobias suggests using a vertically divided page for mathematical work. One side is used for calculations, drawings, or other steps of the solution process. The other side puts metacognition as well as "emotional surveillance" into effect. The math-anxious learner is taught to keep writing even as nervous symptoms start to occur. If nothing can be thought of for the "work-side," it is crucial to record feelings, thoughts, and self-talk on the "reaction-side." This approach enables the instructor to give encouragement as well as specific feedback for future improvement, noting exactly where problem solving broke down, suggesting a set of steps to try out next time, and building more positive self-talk in the learner. Even at the early stages, this technique can help adult students avoid the anguish of staring at a blank sheet while others in the room seem to be finding so much to write down.

Linking motivation to cognition through techniques such as this avoids devoting undue time and energy to reviewing past events. The instructor's focus is on finding out whether math anxiety is a problem for the student, assuring those confronting the problem that their feelings are quite common and can be conquered, and providing activities designed to give early success experiences.

4) **Using social communities.** Adults are often placed in positions where their work is visible to others and where they see how others handle the same types of tasks. This can be a source of considerable stress. Turning to classmates or co-workers for needed assistance and support is often resisted. Newer work in cognitive psychology, however, points to the importance of such social interaction as an aid to effective adult learning. Adults represent a wide variety of life experiences and academic profiles. Class members not only have the potential to encourage others, but to model specific problem-solving skills that can be very helpful to their peers. They represent a valuable but generally neglected resource.

The use of social communities has, under the general heading of "cooperative learning," achieved considerable popularity in elementary and secondary education. While specific features need to be tailored to each adult learning environment, this approach fosters shared responsibility for making progress. Several students can work as a team to practice certain math concepts or skills, for example, with each member expected to help everyone understand the key ideas. Individuals can be given specific roles in a realistic problem solving session, acting as customer, sales clerk, bookkeeper, manager, or comparison shopper, for example, while contributing to the team's learning. Individual assessment is recommended to ensure every student's satisfactory progress, and rewards for both individual and group achievement are used.

Application of cooperative learning guidelines provides an excellent vehicle for helping adults who suffer from math anxiety. When two to four students are jointly responsible for solving a problem or completing an assignment, no one person is in the spotlight, and it becomes "all right" to make mistakes and to ask questions. There is less pressure to find one right way or one correct answer, and it is much more likely that different approaches will be proposed and explored—paying off in a much richer understanding of the topic. Students learn that evaluation need not be a threatening experience, and that it is typical to make mistakes on the way to successful solutions. Naturally, the teacher needs to plan carefully for success, deciding who should work together, choosing appropriate exercises for group practice, and guiding adult learners through their early uncertainty in studying and working cooperatively. The emotional support and academic assistance made possible by using this strategy, though, are precisely the areas most important to the math-anxious learner.

Summary

Math anxiety has serious consequences for the men and women who experience it in daily life, in school, or in work. It has not been greatly reduced through measures previously taken and shows little promise of "going away" by itself. Without requiring expensive new programs, the themes explored here form the basis for a meaningful attack on this problem at the adult level. Guidelines and techniques within each of the four areas are likely to reduce the disturbing waste of learning potential that now occurs when math anxiety interferes with thinking.

Problem Solving—an Attitude as well as a Strategy

George Pólya, in his famous book *How to Solve It* (1946, 5), outlines the following method for problem solving:

1. Understand the problem
2. Develop a plan
3. Carry out the plan
4. Reflect on one's work

The crux of this strategy is, of course, the second step. Pólya, and many authors before and after him, suggested several methods for developing a plan, such as draw a picture, guess and check, and choose a simpler case. However, if none of these attacks work, what does one do? Pólya does not have much help for us. "The first rule of discovery is to have brains and good luck," he says. "The second rule of discovery is to sit tight till you get a bright idea" (1946, 158).

Experienced problem solvers know that although this advice does not seem very helpful, it is about the only advice that can be given. They know that when the solution to a problem continues to elude them even after hours or days of committed work, if they do sit tight, eventually good luck favors them and some new insight emerges. Usually such insight comes to them suddenly, at some odd moment, often when they are not working directly on the problem. Frequently they are at a loss to explain where it came from. Such an emergence of new insight is frequently called a *breakthrough*.

Both Henri Poincaré (1929) and Jacques Hadamard (1949) wrote on the subject of mathematical breakthrough. More recently, a book has appeared by Noddings and Shore (1984) that covers the subject quite thoroughly from a general rather than a mathematical perspective. These works seem to agree that some ways of sitting tight and

Reprinted from Rosemary Schmalz, S.P., "Problem Solving—an Attitude as well as a Strategy," *Mathematics Teacher*, December 1989.

waiting are more productive than others. For want of a better phrase, we can call these more productive ways of sitting and waiting a *problem-solving attitude.*

With the heavy emphasis on teaching problem solving in today's mathematics curriculum, it would be well for us to explore this problem-solving attitude further. When we teach problem-solving strategies to students, we must be cautious that we do not give them the impression that problem solving is a bag of tricks that we apply at the right time and place. It is important that we discuss with them that our attitude toward our work is just as important as the strategies we use in our work.

Just what are the components of the problem-solving attitude? Standard 6 in the chapter on "Evaluation" in NCTM's recent *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics* (1989, 214) seems to be pointing to just such an attitude. This standard suggests that we assess students' "mathematical disposition," which is described as follows:

- confidence in using mathematics as a tool to communicate, to reason, and to solve problems;
- flexibility in exploring mathematical ideas and trying alternative methods in the solution of a problem;
- willingness to persevere at a mathematical task;
- interest, curiosity, and inventiveness regarding mathematics;
- tendency to monitor and reflect upon their own thinking and performance.

Let us consider each of these components further.

Of the five components listed, I would choose as primary the third one, "willingness to persevere at a mathematical task." No one has ever solved a problem without *wanting* to do so, and this desire must be strong enough to keep one working when the problem proves difficult. We need to emphasize to students that they can become better problem solvers by wanting to solve problems and by working hard. As with tennis, dance, or chess, talent is a factor, but a commitment to hard work always leads to improvement. Concomitant with this notion of perseverance is the ability to ponder the problem even over a long period of time. Noddings and Shore call such pondering "vivid passivity" in which we are "fully engaged" (1984, 74).

We may want to share Poincaré's accounts of his experiences or passages from Hadamard's work or some other mathematician's description of mathematical breakthrough with students. A good place to start looking is in *Mathematical People: Profiles and Interviews* (Albers 1985) or *The Mathematical Experience* (Davis 1981). Such writings contain helpful descriptions of both the waiting for, and the emergence of, new insight.

The second component listed is "flexibility in exploring mathematical ideas." Often a student reports to us that a problem can't be done because it does not lend itself to the strategy most recently discussed. Unfortunately, we may have programmed him or her to make this response by habitually assigning problems all of which use only the most recently presented strategy. We must be careful to listen respectfully to every suggestion of how to approach a problem and to beware of giving the impression that one solution is better than another because it was the one *we* had in mind. Our students must feel free to try various attacks on a problem rather than see their task as discovering the "right" strategy or the one they think we want them to use. At the same time, students must be helped to realize that when a particular attack has proved itself worthless, it is best to abandon it and start over with a fresh idea. A good example to share with students is the story of Kepler, who had to give up a pet theory that planets had circular orbits around the sun before he could find the correct answer (Kline 1959, 116), or the story of Saccheri, who for all practical purposes discovered non-Euclidean geometry but couldn't see what his results meant because he was so intent on proving Euclid's fifth postulate (Eves 1969, 125).

The fifth criterion, "the tendency to monitor and reflect upon their own thinking and performance," must also be a component of the problem-solving attitude. We should take time to let students verbalize why they did or did not succeed. It is interesting to note that students can rarely explain why they succeed. "I just saw how to do it" may be all they can say. Of course this explanation is all any of us can say about a moment of breakthrough. However, what we want them to ponder are the attitudes they brought to the problem: Had they allowed themselves to get really interested in it? What kind of attention had they given it? What were they doing when the insight came?

We might discuss some of our own experiences. Perhaps we might ask mathematicians at local colleges to recount stories of how insights came to them. Again, we can turn to the writings of well-known mathematicians. From such discussion, students will see that they are participating in the same process as the "greats," or at least the "professionals." The sophistication of the problems may differ, but the process does not.

As our students become better problem solvers they will fulfill the fifth criterion easily—"confidence in using mathematics . . . ." They may even grow to like it! Likewise, as they become more confident, they will become more curious and inventive, as criterion 4 states. A cycle will become operative, for as one becomes more interested and curious, one can persevere longer at the task and be more flexible in one's attack.

Being familiar with a variety of strategies surely helps us solve problems, but success comes to those who learn how to work with a problem-solving attitude, a hard-to-define mixture of structure and flexibility, patience and eagerness, diligence and relaxation. Let's teach the attitude along with the strategies.

Test-Taking Made Easy . . . Well, *Easier*

The big history exam is coming up . . . to say nothing of quizzes in English, math, and science. With all that studying to do, who needs to use valuable time learning how to take tests?

You do. It's true that you, like many students, have been taking tests ever since your kindergarten teacher asked you to count the colors of the rainbow. Yet, despite all this experience, many students may not be all that test-wise. They may not realize that test-taking is a learned skill, not one you are born with.

Test-taking is also a skill that will be necessary long after you receive your high school diploma. If you go on to college, you will be essayed, mutliple-choiced, and final-exammed for years to come. Those of you choosing a non-college career path will still end up taking tests. Armed service recruits take placement exams. Tradespeople must pass exams for licensing. On-the-job promotions often come as a result of work-related tests.

Confidence Helps

One thing that will help your performance in any of these tests is confidence. Karl Kirkland and James Hollandsworth, psychologists at the University of Southern Mississippi, taught students several different ways of preparing for tests to see which was the most effective. They found that students who combined test-taking strategies with self-reassurance performed best on exams. These students gained calm and confindence by coaching themselves with thoughts like "I have plenty of time—read the questions carefully" or when they become distracted, they think, "I will think about that later, now, back to the test."

Of course, all the confidence in the world won't help if you haven't opened your biology book all semester. Luckily many experts have spent *their* study time finding methods that will help you prepare for that biology final—and all the other tests along the way.

Studying Doesn't Hurt

- Start your studying long before your exams. The best review begins at the time of your second assignment and continues through the semester. It includes well-organized notes, an outlined textbook, and all previous test questions.
- Identify and learn the most important information, especially material in boldface type, chapter questions, and chapter summaries.
- Test yourself by making up and answering questions based on the material. Don't cheat and just ask easy questions; you can be sure your teacher won't.
- Pay special attention to your teacher the week before your exam because most instructors will

Reprinted from Susan Goodman, "Test-Taking Made Easy . . . Well, *Easier*," *Current Health 2*, January 1990, Vol. 16, No. 5, by permission of Field Publications, Middletown, Connecticut.

earmark important things to study. If you notice your teacher saying, "In this chapter we have seen the three very important instances of symbolism," you'd better know all three of those examples on test day.

- Try to avoid all-nighters at all costs. First, the mind doesn't appreciate or respond well to this kind of force-feeding. And, the morning after, you often feel so tired and dazed that you can't think clearly about what you've learned or how to organize it into a good answer.
- Don't use drugs, which affect short-term memory. This applies to the illegal ones, of course, but also to over-the-counter drugs that claim to promote alertness.

"Be Prepared"

Knowing the material is the first all-important step to a good test grade, but the process doesn't end there. You may know every fact required but still lose valuable points to misread questions or rushed, sloppy answers. Taking an exam requires almost as much care as good preparation. Here are a dozen ideas that, if followed, will help you score big on your next test:

1. Just like the Boy Scouts, "Be Prepared" with plenty of supplies. You don't want to waste any of your time or composure looking for a pencil or borrowing paper.
2. Read through the entire test, paying particular attention to all instructions. Make sure you understand what is required before you plow into answering the first questions. This initial read-through will let you gauge what lies ahead, tell you the type of answer expected, the number of points assigned to each question, etc. It also lets your unconscious start searching for a good answer to Question #5 while you are still formally working on your first essay.
3. Budget your time according to the point value of each question. If, for example, one essay is worth 50 percent of a test, plan to spend about half your work time on this question. Make a note of how much time to allot to each section and try to stick to the schedule.

Write Clearly

4. As silly as it may seem, write clearly. Teachers can't give credit to answers they cannot decipher.
5. Generally, answer the easier questions first. This method guarantees you will get credit for what you know. Writing down several correct answers may also build confidence to help you tackle the more difficult questions.
6. Look for the key and qualifying words in every question. Ask yourself what the teacher is looking for in your answer: facts, analysis, the application of basic principles. Instructions such as compare and contrast, explain and evaluate might seem similar, but they require quite different responses.
7. For essay questions, a short outline can help you organize your answer into a logical presentation filled with important details.

Don't Give Up

8. If you run out of time before getting to that last essay, don't give up. Salvage some points by writing

an outline with major headings, subheadings, and supporting facts.

9. For multiple-choice questions, try to come up with your own answer before checking the options your teacher has provided. Even if you see "your" answer, go through the others to make sure they aren't better than your own. Also, don't be influenced by the patterns of letters created by your response. Just because the answers have been "a, b, c, a, b, c" so far, only superstition suggests the next answer be "a" again.

10. Take your teachers into account while taking their test. Use the type of style and examples each prefers.

11. Leave space between essay questions in case you want to go back and add something.

12. Leave enough time to review your paper carefully for careless mistakes. Take this opportunity to supplement essay questions with new thoughts and ideas.

13. Never let a poor performance lower your self-esteem. Remember that exams test how much you know about a specific subject, not your worth as a human being. Only you can grade yourself in that!

Why Some Women Do Not Enter Nontraditional Occupations

1. **Fear of pay inequity**

   Some women are afraid that if they go into jobs that are predominantly held by men, they will not get paid as much as the men on the job.

2. **Lack of confidence**

   Some women are afraid that they are not able to do these jobs.

3. **Never thought of it**

   Some women were told all their lives that only certain jobs are open to women—like waitress, cashier, or nurse. It may never have occurred to them that they could do other jobs.

4. **Hard to get information**

   Some women want to get information and do not know where to look. Others have tried to find out about job openings in nontraditional areas and were given little or no information.

5. **Fear of what friends and family will think**

   Some women do not pursue jobs in nontraditional fields because they are afraid that their friends and family will not approve.

6. **Hard to get training**

   Women who already are working in traditional jobs (including being a housewife) may not have the time or money to get retrained for a nontraditional job.

By Margaret A. Nash, Vocational Studies Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin, 1991.

7. **Fear of math and science**

   Some women may not consider nontraditional fields because they think that they will need a lot of math and science, and they hated math and science in school.

8. **Fear of danger**

   Some women are afraid of heights or of enclosed places, or of working with electrical or heavy equipment.

9. **Fear of bad treatment on the job**

   Women may be afraid of being harassed, teased, put-down, or even hurt by others at the job-site.

Questions for discussion:

What other reasons are there that women have not pursued nontraditional fields?

Which of these feel like barriers to you?

What are possible answers or solutions to these barriers?

Why Some Women Do Not Enter Nontraditional Occupations

1. Fear of pay inequity
2. Lack of confidence
3. Never thought of it
4. Hard to get information
5. Fear of what friends and family will think
6. Hard to get training
7. Fear of math and science
8. Fear of danger
9. Fear of bad treatment on the job

By Margaret A. Nash, Vocational Studies Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin, 1991.

Study Distractions Analysis

Concentration is the number one problem for many students. Frequently, the problem is one of finding a place to study where there are no external distractions. External distractions are those that originate outside the body. Telephone call, visitors, and noises are examples. Concentration may be difficult when there are too many such distractions present. This checklist will help you analyze distractions in the places you study.

List the three places where you usually study in the order you use them most:
A. ________________ B. ________________ C. ________________

Now check the column that applies to each of these places. T = True F = False

Place A	Place B	Place C	
T F	T F	T F	1. Other people often interrupt me when I study here.
T F	T F	T F	2. Much of what I can see here reminds me of things that don't have anything to do with studying.
T F	T F	T F	3. I can often hear radio or TV when I study here.
T F	T F	T F	4. I can often hear the phone ringing when I study here.
T F	T F	T F	5. I think I take too many breaks when I study here.
T F	T F	T F	6. I seem to be especially bothered by distractions here.
T F	T F	T F	7. I usually don't study here at a regular time each week.
T F	T F	T F	8. My breaks tend to be too long when I study here.
T F	T F	T F	9. I tend to start conversations with people when I study here.
T F	T F	T F	10. I spend time on the phone here that I should be using for study.
T F	T F	T F	11. Temperature conditions here are not very good for studying.
T F	T F	T F	12. Chair, table, and lighting arrangements here are not very helpful for studying.
T F	T F	T F	13. When I study here, I often am distracted by certain individuals (children, etc.).
T F	T F	T F	14. I don't enjoy studying here.

Now total the checks in each column. The column which has the most "False" checks may be the least distracting place to study. Try to plan your day so that you do as much of your work as you can there.

Reprinted by permission of Helen Conway, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Learning Styles and Individual Differences in Learning

The recent findings of many researchers studying learning styles may be particularly crucial for adults re-entering college, as well as for those teaching and advising them. For example, the environment is very important as an encouragement or inhibitor of learning. We all know of teenagers who cannot study without loud music in the background, or adults who blot out distracting noise by playing a background of "easy listening" or classical music. There are those who study best in total quiet or who need the hum of air conditioners. It is important for adults to analyze the environment that maximizes the effectiveness of their studying. Resuming serious study is difficult enough without an environment that disturbs or distracts.

A person's need for light is another important factor. Many of us grew up in households where, when we were reading, a concerned parent would interrupt us to turn on the light. The research shows now that some people learn better in the dark and should be left alone. Conversely, some people are very uneasy without bright light and can't function well without it, particularly in northern climates during the winter months. Room temperature may also be important to the learner, although it is not always within our control. If the room temperature becomes a problem, learners should try to correct it: if unsuccessful, they should try to compensate for it. Even the design of rooms—at home or in class—has an impact. Some of us are more productive in clutter; others demand an orderly environment. Some like furniture spread out or arranged in rows; others need to be clustered more informally with other people in close proximity. The learner must know how to structure the study space to support learning. Similarly, an instructor must consider needs of the class members when arranging the furniture of the classroom, assuming it is movable.

Reprinted from Sheryl Riechmann-Hruska, "Learning Styles and Individual Differences in Learning," *Equity and Excellence,* Vol. 23, No. 3 by permission of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA.

The emotional makeup of individual learners needs to be revisited when dealing with adult learners. Subject matter content will affect learner motivation. When such individuals can see a direct payback from learning a skill or concept, most will find it easier to exert the necessary effort. Information that appears likely to help them succeed in their personal or professional lives usually appeals to them more quickly than material that is less specifically related. Adults are perhaps the least tolerant learners of material that they fail to see as relevant to their lives.

Some adults are extraordinarily persistent. They are accustomed to problem solving in their lives and know they must stick with an issue to solve it successfully. If they see themselves as responsible and determined, they will persevere in learning that seems important for them to master. Adults will often question who is responsible for their learning—who is really doing the teaching? As they come to see that they are ultimately responsible for their own learning and must take charge of it, they will become deeply invested in it.

The structuring of learning is very important to adult learners. Some people are better learners on certain days of the week, at certain times of the day, or even at certain times of the month. The interesting problem we face with many adult learners is that their most productive hours are spent at work. They must cram their learning into late afternoon or evening hours after a tiring day at work or in the home with children. Not only is such a schedule exhausting in itself, but there is a very small percentage of people for whom the later part of the day or evening is a desirable time to be faced with new information or the mastery of new skills. This is a crucial item for administrators in higher education as well as for students and instructors.

My own primary area of research is into the sociology of learning. Fifteen years ago I started inquiring into whether people prefer to learn alone or in groups, whether they want to explore for themselves or to be led by the teacher. Interestingly, I have found that although they have preferences, adults will compensate for those preferences and learn in any situation presented to them. Since they have had to learn from lecturing instructors, they do learn even if they dislike that method of instruction. They tolerate working in groups even if they dislike it. Although people have definite preferences, the impact of those preferences seems to fade with age as people learn to be more resilient. Even though they may hate a particular method, they will learn in spite of this aversion and the amount of learning that is accomplished will not be affected. It is certainly fortunate for us that they are so receptive.

There is also a considerable amount of work being done on cognitive style mapping. Some people do better when they hear information. Others prefer to see it, read, or even touch it. Although there are learners who do better when they can physically shuffle, move, or manipulate things, many of our classrooms do not accommodate this kind of learner. Perhaps we need to consider the tactile aspect of subject matter when working with these learners.

Intake is another interesting factor—do you like to eat while studying? While we tend to think of study-related snacking as just a bad habit, it may actually be a learning style variable. Still another issue that is just beginning to appear in literature on adult learning is mobility; it has been a part of the literature on children's learning for a long time. Some people learn better moving than standing still or sitting—they will perform better when allowed to get up from their seats. Since this is a critical issue for them, we need to examine our ability to tolerate such behavior in our classrooms. Unless we are teaching experientially, most of us just have the students come into a room and sit. People come into school and sit from the time they are little until they reach old age, yet there is a good percentage of the population who could learn better if they were at least allowed to stand. After all, Ernest Hemingway wrote his novels standing up at a specially designed desk! We need to be more tolerant of these needs and also to start employing such techniques as simulation and role play to help students increase their retention. We need to take these differences seriously—to think of the different learning style as a variable, not as a disability.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we need to consider the psychological factors in individual learning styles. These variables take hold very early in the learner's life—perhaps as early as fourth or fifth grade—and persist throughout life. The learner may learn to compensate for the psychological variable, but will always learn best in the style that has become integral. For example, there is still a lot of work being done in the area of cerebral dominance, the issue of right or left hemispheric preference. Currently, this work is not being emphasized as much as it was a few years ago when the right and left brain were talked about as two separate brains—the right hemisphere being more visual, poetic, and intuitive, and the left being more linear, rational, and analytic. We are now being told that the two parts of the brains do communicate and that we should not be too quick to categorize people as impulsive or reflective, although early tendencies to behave in one or the other manner do persist into adulthood.

But perhaps the most basic of these factors is the dichotomy between analytical and global thinking. This distinction might best be illustrated by the example below. When we ask analytical learners to pick out and explain the five major points in an article, they will respond confidently, "The first one is . . ." and so on through the five points. If we were to ask global learners the same question, the response would be, "The article starts out by . . ." Global learners want to tell you the whole story. If you ask them to give you pieces of information rather than the whole, they first cannot understand why you would want that and then are unable to. Such learners lack both the skills and the inclination to handle information in that way. This is certainly a dilemma for college instructors who are accustomed to the analytical response to information. Most traditional education focuses on the analytical style, and most learning researchers show a preference for the analytical style in their studies. They have a strong preference for the ability to take things apart, to prioritize, to rank items in order, and to enjoy such tasks.

On the other hand, the global style is seen by many as sloppy thinking, laziness, lack of motivation, and many other unfortunate labels. Because of changes in admissions policies and some changes in the larger culture that surrounds higher education, a greater proportion of people with global styles are entering our classrooms and trying to succeed in school. We must realize that the norms, biases, and traditions of higher education favor the analytical style and overlook the global learner's needs. For example, if we collect most examinations and look carefully at the questions being asked, we will find that almost all are analytical in nature. The students who do well on those exams are those who have mastered the analytical style. We need to realize that many of the newer students don't work that way and can't work that way without being taught how. Many teachers dismiss global learners by telling them that if they can't do the work, they should not be in college. That may be a tidy way of taking care of things, but it dismisses about half of the world. If probably dismisses about 75 to 80 percent of the women, since most women are global learners. It is natural for them to emphasize connection rather than separation; they desire to keep things together rather than to cut them apart. Since they often operate out of the need to think, see, and feel in a global manner, they are not accepted or reinforced in the academic setting. We must change our approach if we are to include them.

The sciences are changing now. We are starting to see that the old scientific method of seeking out one variable and studying it in great depth doesn't answer global questions, such as pollution and the nuclear threat. There seem to be attitudinal changes in the sciences and in education that will allow us as individual teachers and researchers to be more aware of ourselves and our biases in teaching and working with people. If we, as analytical teachers, have global students in our classes, we are likely to interrupt these students when they are talking and ask them to get to the point. We are likely to think the global person is wasting time because of a fuzzy thought process. Conversely, when the global person asks the analytical teacher to give details, the answer may be in the form of a yes or no, making the global person feel the instructor is insensitive, unfeeling, or uncaring as well as impatient. We need to make sure that we are not pushing our students into corners from which they cannot escape. We need to consider accommodating at least two learning styles to help our students be successful.

I shall conclude by asking you to begin the process of becoming sensitive to learning styles by trying to get a sense of your own. There are, incidentally, about 32 models for measuring learning style, but one of the best is this one: Suppose you have a very tough piece of reading to do, an assignment that must be complete by tomorrow. Assuming that it is now early morning, ask yourself where you will go to read it, when you will read it, and who is going to be around when you are reading it. You must also assume that you have control over these factors, which, of course, you may not have. As you are picturing the ideal, now consider the real. Many morning readers will not be able to get to the assignment until night-time. Many people who would like to be outside in the sunshine cannot be. Some of you might like to be on the sofa surrounded by afghans and pillows but will have to do the reading in the straight chairs of the library. Some people who want dead quiet have to contend with roommates, children, and spouses who like loud music or who need to consult them about urgent problems.

In our classrooms, we put together 25 people with very different preferences and very complicated lives. We usually ask all of those complex people to sit down, sit still, and be quiet. Hardly a person in the world would list that as their first preference for learning, yet we ask them to sit there and do their best learning. Unfortunately, some of our students would think we are not taking them seriously if we did not operate in this mode. But we owe ourselves and our students a more comprehensive approach to teaching and learning. We need to assess learning styles and how they match learning situations, not just in academic articles, but in the everyday classrooms in our colleges and universities.

References

Belenky, M. et al. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind.* New York: Basic Books.

Bergquist, W. and Philips, S. (1975). *Handbook for Faculty Development, Vol. I.* Washington, D.C.: Council for the Advancement of Independent Colleges.

Butler, K. (1984). *Learning and teaching styles: In theory and practice.* Maynard, MA: Gabriel Systems, Inc.

Chickering, A. *et al.* (1981). *The modern American college: Responding to the realities of diverse students and a changing society.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Claxton, C. and Murrell, P. (1987). *Learning styles: Implications for improving educational practices.* Washington, D.C.: ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports, George Washington University.

Cross, K.P. (1981). *Adults as learners: Increasing participation and facilitating learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fincher, C. (1985). Learning theory and research. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research, Vol. I.* New York: Agathon Press.

Kozma, R., Belle, L. and Williams, G. (1978). *Instructional techniques in higher education.* Englewood Cliffs: Educational Technology Publications.

Messick, S. *et al.* (1976). *Individuality in learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mann, R. *et al.* (1970). *The college classroom: Conflict, change and learning.* New York: John Wiley.

National Association of Secondary School Principals. (1982). *Student learning styles and brain behavior: Programs, instrumentation, research.* Reston, VA: NASPP.

Perry, W. (1970). *Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Taylor, L. (1978). *Individuality: Human possibilities and personal choice in the psychological development of men and women.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Study Schedule Hints

The success of your study schedule will depend on the care with which you plan it. Careful consideration of some of these points will help you to make a schedule that will work for you.

1. **Study at a regular time and in a regular place.** Establishing habits of study is extremely important. Knowing *what* you are going to study, and *when*, saves a lot of time in making decisions and retracing your steps to get necessary materials, etc. Avoid generalizations such as "study." Commit yourself more definitely to "study history" or "study chemistry" at certain regular hours.

2. **Study as soon after your lecture as possible.** One hour spent soon after class will do as much good in developing an understanding of materials as several hours a few days later. Check over lecture notes while they are still fresh in your mind. Start assignments while your memory of the assignment is still accurate.

3. **Use isolated hours during the day for studying.** The scattered one- or two-hour free periods between classes, waiting in offices, or riding on the bus, are easily wasted. During the shorter periods, you can memorize vocabulary, study chemical formulas, review new vocabulary, preview a chapter, or proofread a theme. Anticipate these times and plan a particular study task best suited to the situation.

4. **Limit your blocks of study time to no more than two hours on any one course at one time.** After one and one-half to two hours of study, you begin to tire rapidly, and your ability to concentrate decreases rapidly. Taking a break and then switching to studying some other course will provide the change necessary to keep up your efficiency.

5. **Trade time—don't steal it.** When unexpected events arise that take up time you had planned to use for study, decide immediately where you can find time to make up the study missed and then adjust your schedule for that week. Note the three weekend evenings. Most students can afford no more than two of them for recreation, but may wish to use different evenings on different weeks. This "trading agreement" provides for committing one night to study, but rotating it as recreational possibilities vary.

6. **Schedule one weekly period in which all the course work presented during the quarter can be reviewed.** This is an important step for retaining the subject matter and for reducing panic while studying for an exam.

Adapted from materials by Walter Paul, Patricia Wheeler Andrews and others.

7. **Revise your schedule when necessary**. Revise your schedule, but do not abuse it. On occasion, special assignments, papers, exams, or better judgment will probably require some temporary revisions.

8. **Use the first week of the quarter wisely**. The first week of the quarter is full of free time and little pressure. Study anything appropriate in the beginning. This is the best week for getting a head start. Once you are behind in your work, keeping a schedule (which means keeping up with your assignments) becomes very difficult.

9. **Post your weekly schedule in an obvious place where you study**. Keep your daily schedule with you. Remember, you will not be able to keep in mind the plans just written down unless you can refer to them often.

10. **Be sure that you run your schedule, not vice versa!** Check your schedule after each day. Determine whether or not you realistically planned an amount you could study. Determine, also, if you were self-controlled enough in completing your assignments.

Study Schedule Hints

1. Study at a regular time and a regular place.
2. Study as soon after your lecture as possible.
3. Use isolated hours during the day for studying.
4. Limit blocks of study time to no more than two hours on any one course at one time.
5. Trade time—don't steal it.
6. Schedule one weekly period in which all the course work presented during the quarter can be reviewed.
7. Revise your schedule when necessary.
8. Use the first week of the quarter wisely.
9. Post your weekly schedule in an obvious place where you study.
10. Be sure that you run your schedule, not vice versa!

Adapted from materials by Walter Paul, Patricia Wheeler Andrews and others.

Competency 18.0

Understanding differences in the workforce

18.01 Develop an awareness of differences in cultures.
18.02 Identify changing workforce and personal impact upon the workforce.
18.03 Develop empathy in working with people from different cultures.
18.04 Identify benefits of working with other cultures.

Competency 18.0
Overview

People entering the workforce in the 1990s will be confronted by a workplace that is more culturally diverse than ever before. The all-white male atmosphere that has traditionally existed in American business will change as more immigrants and people from different cultural backgrounds join the workforce. The cultural diversity of this pool of new employees has already had profound effects on the way people relate in many work environments.

For the new job-seeker, an understanding of differences in cultures and an ability to communicate across cultures will be invaluable in the job market of the 1990s. As the workforce shifts to a more culturally diverse population, new workers will need such cross-cultural communication skills to work effectively with others. The worker who possesses these skills will also have an advantage in their search for employment, because many businesses are now beginning to seriously address ways of dealing with cultural diversity.

This competency is designed to enable participants to understand cultural differences in the workforce and to develop skills to interact effectively with people different from themselves. Participants completing Competency 18.0: Understanding Differences in the Workforce will be able to:

18.01 Develop an awareness of differences in cultures
18.02 Identify changing workforce and personal impact upon the workforce
18.03 Develop empathy in working with people from different cultures
18.04 Identify benefits of working with other cultures

Indicator 18.01 provides an overview of difference in the workplace and an explanation of cross-cultural communication. Participants get a picture of the new diverse workforce and the changes the workplace is experiencing in response to this new workforce in Indicator 18.02. In the next section, Indicator 18.03, participants are invited to examine their own feelings and experiences with people from other cultures through a series of activities. Finally, in Indicator 18.04, instructors are encouraged to lead a discussion or facilitate a group brainstorming session to help participants explore the benefits of working with people of culturally diverse backgrounds.

Competency 18.0: Understanding Differences in the Workforce

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
18.01 Develop an awareness of differences in cultures	Lecture	*Cross-Cultural Communication in the Workplace: Can We Stay Home Without It?*
18.02 Identify changing workforce and personal impact upon the workforce	Lecture	*Meet Your New Work Force*
	Discussion	*Fact Sheet—Women, Work and the Future: Workforce 2000 (and accompanying overheads)*
18.03 Develop empathy in working with people from different cultures	Activity	*Know How It Feels*
	Lecture	*Finding Common Ground*
	Activity	*Family Influence on Racial Attitudes*
	Activity	*Similarities and Differences*
	Activity	*Television Shows*
	Activity	*Accepting Others*
	Activity	*Racial and Cultural Stereotypes*

Indicator and Content	Instructional Strategies	Title of Resource
18.03 (continued)	Activity	*Perceptions of Differences*
	Lecture	*Dealing With Diversity: Playing Straight with a Mixed Deck*
18.04 Identify benefits of working with other cultures	Discussion or group brainstorming session	

Resources

Colangelo, Nicholas, Dustin, Dick, and Foxley, Cecelia H. (1982). The human relations experience: Exercises in multi-cultural nonsexist education. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.

Michigan Department of Education. (1990). Multicultural education resource guide. Lansing, MI: State Board of Education.

Schniedewind, N. and Davidson, E. (1983). Open minds to equality: A sourcebook of learning activities to promote race, sex, class and age equity. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Sources for Additional Material

Afro-American Eduation Materials, 819 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017

Institute for Peace and Justice, 4144 Lindell, Room 122, St. Louis, MO 63108

Racism and Sexism Resource Center, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023

Cross-Cultural Communication in the Workplace: Can We Stay Home Without It?

As the Workforce 2000 data shows, cultural diversity is and will be the rule rather than the exception in the American workforce. Cross-cultural communication is a natural requirement of the changing workforce demographics which the data describes. Cross-cultural communication provides some of the fundamental skills and building blocks upon which valuing and managing diversity rests.

Our time together is too short to have an in-depth discussion of cross-cultural communication in the workplace so I will confine my remarks to three topics: a very brief description of what cross-cultural communication is; why we can't stay home without it or why cross-cultural communication is essential for the present and future workforces and finally how one learns to communicate across cultures.

What Is Cross-Cultural Communication?

Cross-cultural/intercultural/mulitcultural communication is a tool which helps you to effectively work and interact with people of different cultures. As such it is not a set of skills for one group of people to have in order to work with another group, but rather skills necessary for all people who work together in a multicultural environment. The central principle of cross-cultural communication theory is that everything you do and everything you perceive is filtered through your cultural knowledge. You use this cultural knowledge in every situation. You know when it is safe to cross the street because of this knowledge. You can guess when someone from your culture is lying or know what is expected of you because of this knowledge. This is very effective when you live or work where the culture

Reprinted from Joi Constance Kudirka, "Cross-Cultural Communication in the Workplace: Can We Stay Home Without It?", a paper presented at the 1989 National Alliance of Business Conference in Washington, D.C. on October 3, 1989.

is homogeneous since it allows you to operate smoothly and predictably. You know what to expect and how to behave in any given situation. Unfortunately it causes problems when you interact with a group which is made up of people from heterogeneous cultures. Misunderstanding, hurt feelings and general ill will usually result when one culture's knowledge is used as the base for interacting with staff, employees, clients or customers from other, different cultures. You may find that just because the parking lot is painted to indicate appropriate parking spaces doesn't mean that someone won't park on the grass or that some of the foreign members of your staff seems dishonest because they will not look you in the eye. Cross-cultural communication is an integrated package of knowledge, skill, ability and attitude which helps you find out and understand things like this. It provides a way to know what to expect and how to interact when you live or work with people from other cultures. (In this case, other cultures can mean one which comes from halfway around the world or halfway down the street.)

Why Do We Need Cross-Cultural Communication in the Workplace?

The reason cross-cultural communication is essential in the workplace is the same reason it is necessary to make any good business decision—dollars and cents. The demographics tell us that the new jobseekers will come from many different cultures. In Washington, D.C. and other areas of the U.S., it is now and will continue to be in the future a jobseeker's market. Any potential employee (given the choice) will want to work where she or he feels the most comfortable and the most valued. The employers with the best reputation for providing this kind of environment will get the best applicants. Employers who don't will not only have limited access to the pool of jobseekers but will also start to lose access to their most skilled culturally different employees because they too will go where they feel respected and appreciated. It is easy to find cost quotation for lost revenue when an employee quits unexpectedly or when an important position remains vacant. Cross-cultural communication is the initial step to prevent having this lose/lose situation occur.

I would like to illustrate with some examples of real life situations in which some skill and knowledge about another culture would have saved the day. Please understand that I have no intention of laying responsibility or blame for these situations with either party. They are simply very typical of what happens when people who are reacting very rationally within their own cultural frameworks try to transfer that knowledge into interactions with people from other cultures.

1. An older Vietnamese man worked at a local electronics company. His name (Huynh Van Trung) was difficult for his American supervisor to pronounce. The supervisor's solution to the difficulty was to not address Mr. Trung unless it was absolutely necessary. At those times he would call "Hey guy" and gesture to get his attention. After about two weeks, Mr. Trung, the Vietnamese employee, quit without an explanation. The supervisor was rather upset because Mr. Trung had been a good employee—very hard working and accurate. The supervisor felt very aggrieved because he thought that the employee's abrupt departure was unappreciative given the risk he had taken in hiring someone who didn't speak very good English and the time and attention he had taken in training him. Also, it would require valuable time and expense to hire a new employee. He guessed that the employee had quit to take a better paying job and left so abruptly because the new employer had wanted him to start immediately. In fact, Mr. Trung did not have another job. He quit because he felt he had been treated extremely disrespectfully. He hadn't understood what the supervisor meant when he said "Hey guy" so he looked up "guy" in his dictionary.

Vietnamese culture and language have a highly structured way of addressing different people based on your status in relationship to them. According to Mr. Trung's cultural and linguistic interpretation, he had been addressed in what was equivalent to "Hey boy" to an American black male. Additionally this gesture is one which is only used with small children and animals in Vietnam.

2. The supervisor of a multicultural staff was having trouble making a decision about one of his employees from Afghanistan. The employee was very knowledgeable about the company product and the supervisor knew from conversations with him that he wanted to be promoted to salesman. However, the supervisor wasn't sure the employee had enough initiative to go out and really sell the product. He felt this way because each time a situation arose which was even a little different from any other, when any kind of a decision was called for, when any conflict with the other staff members arose, the employee would always ask the supervisor what he should do. The supervisor felt that if he couldn't do these things within the office he would never be able to do them outside.

   The employee from his point of view felt that he just had an inept supervisor. A good supervisor would not tell his staff to use their own judgment of deal with problems on their own. This is shirking his responsibilities. It is a supervisor's duty and prerogative to direct all work activities, make all decisions and control the activities of his staff. For an employee to try and do these things would be presumptuous, impolite, disrespectful and would probably lead to dismissal.

3. At an all-staff meeting, a Cambodian employee was unexpectedly honored for having the best performance record for the quarter. The staff people making the award said at the beginning of the meeting that they wanted to make a

special announcement. They then said they wanted to recognize this staff person for the best quarterly performance, unfurled a large banner saying "Congratulations" and her name and held up a wrapped gift. After a few seconds and some encouragement from her coworkers, the employee walked to the front of the room, accepted the gift, said thank you and sat down. Upon further encouragement, she unwrapped her gift and placed it on the table.

Although it was not obvious to her coworkers, the whole process made the employee very uncomfortable. Initially she was uncomfortable because in her culture people are not usually singled out of a group for praise or punishment. Cambodians are very modest people. To be publicly acknowledged causes internal conflict because receiving public attention is perceived as being the result of or resulting in prideful behavior. To stand up in front of a group and say thank you seemed immodest because acknowledging the praise or even attracting public attention seems like bragging or boasting. She was also uncomfortable about opening the gift in front of the gift giver which is bad mannered in many Southeast Asian cultures.

All of these examples really happened. They are not rare.

Meet Your New Work Force

Brenda L. Roth had high hopes for Mary, a white woman she hired last year as a receptionist for the front office at SBE, Inc., a computer-products manufacturer in Concord, Calif.

Mary was "a mature, articulate, educated, well-put-together, handsome woman," recalls Roth, SBE's vice president of administration. Throughout the new recruit's first day, Roth heard she was doing a good job, so at the end of the day, Roth was surprised when Mary, smiling pleasantly, said she was quitting. "I don't like to work with gays, coloreds and boat people, so I won't be back."

"If that's the way you feel," Roth told her, "we don't want you back."

Mary had just discovered that the workplace just isn't what it used to be. Nobody's workplace is.

SBE has a multicultural employee mix and likes it that way. Of its 100 workers, 40 percent are women and 23 percent are minorities—blacks, Hispanics or Asians.

SBE's variety symbolizes what is happening all over the United States: The work force is becoming more and more diverse. White males are already in a new minority of their own, representing 45 percent of America's 117.8 million workers in 1986. Over the next dozen years, their share will decline to 39 percent.

"White males, thought of only a generation ago as the mainstays of the economy, will comprise only 15 percent of the net additions to the labor force between 1985 and 2000," says *Workforce 2000*, a report prepared by the Hudson Institute for the U.S. Department of Labor last year. The rest will be American-born white females, immigrants and a rich mix of native minorities that includes blacks and a wide variety of Hispanics, Asians, American Indians and Pacific Islanders.

Reprinted from Sharon Nelton, "Meet Your New Work Force," *Nation's Business*, July 1988, Vol. 76, No. 7 by permission of *Nation's Business*.

Little by little, senior executives and management experts across America are recognizing that these vast demographic shifts demand a new way of running things—an approach often called "managing diversity." This means recognizing that diversity is already a fact of life, learning to understand "culturally different" workers and creating an environment in which they will flourish.

"The company that gets out in front managing diversity, in my opinion, will have a competitive edge," says Xerox Chairman David T. Kearns in a three-part series of training videotapes, "Valuing Diversity," produced by Copeland Griggs Productions of San Francisco.

"We want to attract the very best talent available. And talent is gender-blind and color-blind," says James E. Preston, president and chief operating officer of Avon Products, Inc.

Proponents of the new concept say companies stand to gain a number of advantages when they do a good job of managing diversity. Among them are:

The opportunity to hire and keep the best of the new labor pool. Companies with reputations for being good places for women or minorities to work are sought out by those workers.

Greater innovation. The broader the spectrum of backgrounds in a group, says one executive, the richer the ideas that emerge.

"Without women, *USA Today* would have been *'USA Yesterday,'*" Nancy J. Woodhull, president of Gannett New Media, told participants at a University of Southern California Conference. When *USA Today* was launched, she said, readers liked it immediately because they found it interesting. "The reason we were interesting is that there were a lot of ideas from different people with different points of view in our news meetings every day. There were women; there were minorities; there were young people; there were old people. There were people to went to Harvard. There were people who went to Trenton State in New Jersey."

Better performance among female and minority workers. When only white males have opportunities to attain positions of power in a company, it "diminishes the sense of motivation and commitment of the workers who are underrepresented," says Denise Cavanaugh, an organization-development consultant in Washington.

Ability to make the most of ethnic or international markets. "We are consumer marketers, and the marketplace is very diverse in this country," says Avon's Jim Preston. "Who best understands the needs of Hispanics, Asians and women than Hispanics, Asians and women?"

Procter and Gamble has had great success in recruiting minorities and women, according to Calvin A. Harper, who is black and is an officer in the company. "We're convinced that this diversity in our work force can give us a significant competitive advantage if managed or utilized effectively."

But for many companies, success in meeting affirmative-action goals has created a new problem: retaining women and minorities and moving them up through the ranks.

"We tried everything," says Preston. "We tried mentoring, we tried recruiting at black and other minority universities, we had special internship programs, we had internal tracking. You name it, we tried it all."

The problem, Avon found out, was not getting minorities and women in the door. It was keeping them.

It was a classic example of what R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr., calls "the frustrating cycle." A company meets its hiring goals for minorities and women, and it develops high expectations that they will work well and move up in the corporation. "Unfortunately, these expectations are rarely met," says Thomas, director of the American Institute for Managing Diversity, Inc., and Morehouse College, in Atlanta.

"So you have frustration," he continues. "Frustration on the part of people who were recruited because they are not experiencing what they had hoped to have happen, and frustration on the part of managers because they don't understand why these 'right' people aren't moving up the hierarchy and because they are not being given credit for a good-faith effort."

The disappointed minorities or women leave the company. Often, the company will make another recruitment effort, beginning the cycle again.

Avon's Jim Preston and other business leaders find that meeting the challenges of the new work force requires some fundamental changes in corporate culture. Most American businesses have corporate cultures that have "been described and imprinted by white males," he says. "Small wonder, then, that minorities and women have had difficulty over the years in adapting to the climates that exist in these businesses."

Companies can make the culturally different worker feel uncomfortable or alienated by instituting rules that favor traditional white male culture—such as banning corn-row hairstyles popular among black women or setting dress codes that requires white shirts and ties.

At more serious levels, companies often inadvertently prevent the advancement of women and minorities. White males may feel they can take the measure of a white male more easily or feel more comfortable with him, says Denise Cavanaugh. They may fear going out on a limb to promote a woman or a minority employee.

Or they may misinterpret the behavior of people unlike themselves. One of the Copeland Griggs videos demonstrates, for example, a scene in which a white male manager questions the wisdom of giving a promotion to an Asian because the Asian is reluctant to speak of his own personal achievements. In the manager's view, the employee has not shown that he can provide leadership; in the Asian's view, it is inappropriate to toot your own horn.

"Some cultures emphasize working as a team in a group; others emphasize individual pursuits," observes Andrew M. Geller, vice president of the Hay Group, a management consulting company. "Some value consensus-building; others emphasize competition and winners and losers."

The white male system that predominates in American business, many psychologists say, is marked by emphases on objectivity, competition and "getting down to business." "We're trained throughout our education to become critical thinkers and to be hard-nosed and adversarial," says Nancy Rule Goldberger, a co-author of a study called *Women's Ways of Knowing*.

But women tend to gain much of their knowledge subjectively—through intuition, for example. When they get into the business world, they find this kind of knowledge belittled by their male peers. They also are uncomfortable with the adversarial style favored by men. In fact, women and minorities frequently complain of being ignored in business situations even though their ideas may be better than those of their white male colleagues.

Managing diversity means not only tolerating differences but also supporting and nurturing them, says the Hay Group's Geller. One popular assumption has been that women aren't assertive enough and therefore need assertiveness training so that they can be more like men.

"I would prefer to see organizations that instead say there are different ways to make your points around here, and it isn't necessarily by being the most assertive about it," says Geller.

Smaller firms may have the advantage in managing diversity because they are more in touch with their individual workers and are more likely to accommodate their differences.

About 75 percent of the 180 employees at Pace Foods, Inc., in San Antonio are Mexican-Americans. Pace, which makes Pace Picante Sauce, is headed by a white male, President Kit Goldsbury.

Goldsbury has been watching the demographics and knows that, if anything, he can expect still more Mexican-Americans in the company's future. And he's prepared.

"We're a bilingual company," says Goldsbury, who spent much of his youth on a family-owned ranch in Mexico, where he learned Spanish. Publications are printed in two languages, and even meetings are conducted in both Spanish and English.

Pace might have lost a good mechanic had it not been so flexible. One applicant took a company-required test and failed. "We gave it to him again in Spanish, and he scored very, very high," says Goldsbury.

At SBE, where the Asian workers are primarily Filipino, Brenda Roth says, "There was a lot of consciousness-raising when the Philippine government went through a complete change two years ago." The company offered extended leaves of absence to people who wanted to go back to the Philippines to check on their families. Two employees accepted the offer.

SBE is headed by two white males, Thomas C. Andersen, chairman and CEO, and William R. Gage, president. But Roth credits them with creating an environment in which all kinds of people can develop and advance. Roth started as a sales administrator when she was hired five years ago, and she received several promotions before becoming a vice president. One Hispanic and three Asians hold management or supervisory positions. And last year, the company named a woman to its seven-member board of directors.

Does she see the possibility of a minority or a woman ever running the company? "Absolutely," she says.

In large companies, accommodating diversity in corporate culture is a more deliberate process. And one of the best examples of what a large company can do is Avon, with 30,000 employees worldwide.

Four years ago Avon brought in Roosevelt Thomas and a San Francisco consultant, Ron Brown, to help it address its turnover problem. According to Jim Preston, Thomas and Brown first worked with top managers, helping them identify the subtle "negative assumptions" that existed in Avon's culture, such as "Asians generally make good technicians but not good managers," or "blacks inherently aren't as smart as whites." Over the next three years, all of Avon's middle managers were put through seminars that aimed at attacking such biases.

Three years ago Avon also created two positions with the unusual title of "director of multicultural planning," one post for the corporate office and one for the company's beauty-products division, which brings in 92 percent of Avon's $3.2 billion annual revenues.

Daisy Chin-Lor, a Chinese-American born in New York, was moved into the beauty-group post from a marketing job. Top management, she says, wanted someone "who had not only the line-management mentality but could attack this like a business."

One thing that makes Avon's approach unique, says Chin-Lor, who was recently promoted to area director of human resources for continental Europe, is that it ties multicultural planning into its strategic plan.

Representatives of three ethnic networks—black, Asian and Hispanic—meet regularly with Preston and Avon's chairman, Hicks B. Waldron. Once, the minority delegation said Avon's process for selecting people for promotion left too much to the whims of a few people in upper management. In response, Avon last year improved its system of tracking employee skills. When an opening occurs, the candidate slating is done not by line management but by the human-resources department.

Says Preston: "We insist that there be a representation of women and minorities on every slate, and if there is none, we won't look at it until there is one or they tell us that for this particular position there just are no minorities. But we challenge it each time."

Although Preston says Avon is still "far from perfect," its approach is beginning to pay off. The company has increased the number of minorities at the director level from 15 to 22 since 1986. Over 60 percent of its managers are women, and 13 women hold senior management positions.

A company still has a choice. "A uniform set of expectations and rewards makes sense when you've got a fairly uniform work force," says Andrew Geller. Senior management can still insist on uniformity even in a diverse work force. Both diversity and uniformity, he says, are "viable alternatives."

Large or small, if your company chooses the approach of managing diversity, here are some of the measures you can take:

- Aim for an environment where no one has an advantage or a disadvantage because of race, sex, ethnic origin or creed. This includes white males, says Roosevelt Thomas.

- Identify the elements in your corporate culture that prevent you from retaining good minority and female employees. You may find prejudices that serve as deterrents, or that some of your systems, like Avon's promotion system, need to be altered.

- Couple awareness or sensitivity training with action. Accepting and valuing diversity is a formal goal of the Hoechst Celanese Chemical Group in Dallas, and its managers are put through training to make them aware of prejudices. But, says the group's human-resource manager, R.W. (Bob) Swanbeck, they are also rated on how well they meet employee equality objectives as part of their performance appraisals.

- Take on some of the burden of adjustment. When you expect minorities and women to do all the adapting to your culture, you sap them of the energy that could otherwise go into their work. Pace Foods not only offers classes in English to its Hispanic workers, but also provides Spanish lessons for its English-speaking employees.

- Help minorities and women fit in and advance. Make sure they understand the unwritten rules of your organization. Look for development opportunities for them. Some companies this year, for example, will be sending promising women managers to one of six four-day seminars called "Executive Women Workshop: Development for Women as Leaders." They are sponsored by the Center for Creative Leadership of Greensboro, N.C.

Does managing diversity well really help the bottom line? It's too soon to tell, but Brenda Roth says SBE's diverse work force has helped the company grow from 17 employees in 1982 to its present 100 employees and $9 million in annual sales. And Preston says that sales and profits for the Avon beauty group have been "straight up" during the past 2 1/2 years.

When it comes to valuing diversity, Preston is a true believer. Instead of thinking of the United

States as a melting pot, he says, "I'd rather view it as a mosaic—composed of many cultures, many races, many colors, many religions. We all have to recognize that America's greatness is a result of the fact that we are this beautiful mosaic, the only one in the world."

Fact Sheet
Women, Work and the Future: Workforce 2000

From 1989 through the year 2000, two out of three new entrants to the labor force will be women.

- By 2000, it is projected that 80% of women ages 25-54 will be in the work force. Women will comprise nearly half (47%) of the paid labor force, compared with 39% in 1972.

Between now and 2000:
- the number of Hispanic women in the labor force will increase dramatically, by 85% (from 3.1 million to 5.8 million women).
- Black women will increase their number in the labor force by 33%, to make up 6.1% of the total labor force.
- 1 in 10 new women entrants to the labor force will be Asian, American Indian and Alaskan native women.

In 1988, two-thirds of all women with children under 18 were in the labor force.

- More than half (51%) of mothers of infants are returning to work within the baby's first year.
- 53% of mothers with children under age 3 are in the labor force.
- 25% of mothers of pre-schoolers who are not in the paid work force say they would work if they had access to safe and affordable day care.

Nearly 90% of jobs created between now and the year 2000 will be in the service sector.

- The low-wage, sex-segregated "pink collar ghetto" in which the majority of women work will be reinforced by the shift to a service sector economy.
- 5 of the 11 occupations projected to create the largest number of new jobs over the next decade are now female-dominated occupations, with median weekly wages below the poverty level.

(Note: 1987 poverty-level income for a family of 4 was $11,611 or approximately $223 per week.)

Occupation	# jobs to be created 1986-2000	1987 % Female	1987 median weekly female wages
Retail Sales	1,200,000	68.5	$192
Waitress	752,000	85.1	$178
Cashier	575,000	83.0	$183
Food Worker	449,000	78.5	$149
Nursing Aide	443,000	90.4	$212

Part-time or temporary employment will comprise an increasing share of available jobs.

- More than 25% of women workers work part-time; part-time workers average only 59% of the hourly earnings of full-time workers.
- 62% of temporary workers are women.
- Part-time and temporary jobs typically provide few or no benefits, limited job security, lower wages and few opportunities for advancement.

Sources for this fact sheet:

Hudson Institute, *Workforce 2000*
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Census Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Senate Budget Committee
American Society for Training and Development
Project on the Status and Education of Women (Association of American Colleges)

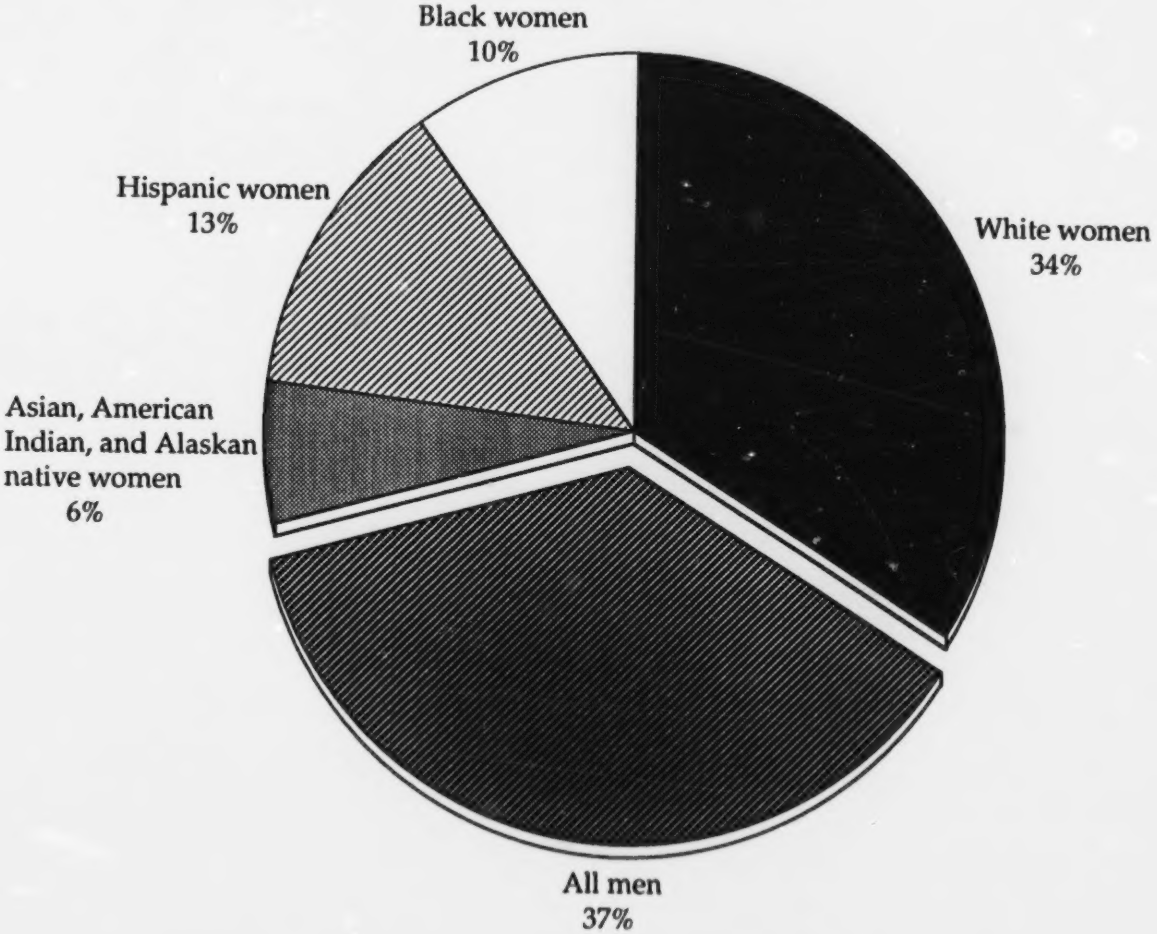
Reprinted from the National Commission on Working Women of Wider Opportunities for Women, 1325 G St., NW, Lower Level, Washington, D.C. 20005

Occupations Creating the Largest Number of New Jobs

Occupation	# jobs to be created 1986-2000	1987 % Female	1987 median weekly female wages
Retail Sales	1,200,000	68.5	$192
Waitress	752,000	85.1	$178
Cashier	575,000	83.0	$183
Food Worker	449,000	78.5	$149
Nursing Aide	443,000	90.4	$212

Reprinted from National Commission on Working Women of Wider Opportunities for Women, 1325 G St., NW, Lower Level, Washington, D.C. 20005.

New Entrants to the Labor Force
1986-2000



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Reprinted from National Commission on Working Women of Wider Opportunities for Women, 1325 G. St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Activity: Know How It Feels

Objective: To become familiar with how it feels to be "different."

Ask participants to think about times in their lives when they felt "different." Allow five or ten minutes to recall and reflect on an incident or time period where they felt like they were not like the others. You might askt hem to write down their experience in order to help them feel again what it was like.

Then ask them to get up and walk around the room, introducing themselves with one-word descriptions of how they felt when they were "different."

Instead of saying, "My name is Jane Doe," one might say, "Hello, my name is Awkward." That description reflects what it felt like to be different. Others describe themselves as afraid, embarrassed, angry, frustrated, uncomfortable, scared, and lost. Occasionally, someone shares a positive description such as "unique."

After everyone is introduced (about ten minutes), lead a discussion. what words were most commonly used? Why? How did it feel to *hear* the descriptions? How did it feel to *say* your description?

How many positive descriptions of being different were used? Why? How many negative descriptions were used? Why?

How can we begin to think about differences in positive ways?

By Margaret A. Nash, Vocational Studies Center, based on materials from Steve Hanamura, "Working With People Who Are Different," © June 1989, *Training and Development*, American Society for Training and Development.

Finding Common Ground

Finding common ground means being able to identify similar characteristics facing all people who are "different." It is impossible to learn everything there is to know about every group of people. However, a particular frame of reference may help participants embrace all difference in ways that provide opportunities to bring out the commonality of difference with all groups of people. After all, most of us want similar things such as success, love, and family.

Common challenges for people who are different include language, energy, and socialization.

Language

Someone who comes to the United States from a different country may have the obvious problem of not being able to speak English. But an individual who has worked in an educational setting could have a similar problem if she were to move into the corporate area. The "language" or vocabulary of that environment—the spoken and unspoken norms—would be foreign to the person. It is a matter of learning how to translate knowledge from one culture to another.

Energy

Look at the extra energy used by a person who is different. If you are a "normal," able-bodied person, imagine the process you go through to get ready for work each day (getting dressed, making breakfast, and taking the necessary steps to transport yourself to your job). Then add in the differences you would have to contend with if you had a physical disability. Include the social concerns and reactions of others.

An individual with a disability works toward company objectives, but he or she needs extra planning to get to the job, must contend with the uncertainty of colleagues regarding how to be helpful, and must deal with coworkers' curiosity. The person who is different uses extra energy to be like his or her colleagues, but still feels different.

Adapted from Steve Hanamura, "Working With People Who Are Different," © June 1989, *Training and Development*, American Society for Training and Development. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

Socialization
An engineering company told about an employee from southeast Asia who did not understand that it was all right to converse with coworkers while on the job. Each time the supervisor said "good morning," the employee thought that it meant he was not working hard enough. Hearing-impaired employees may observe two people talking together in the lunchroom and think they are talking or laughing about them.

The employee from southeast Asia and the hearing-impaired employees are not familiar with the social aspects of work. The question for managers to ask themselves is, "How do those characteristics affect productivity and the bottom line?"

Employees who are different and new to the workplace must understand the importance of planning efficiently, anticipating uncertainty of social norms, and completing job-related tasks on time. When dealing with a performance problem, the key is to be firm with consistent performance expectations, but sensitive to individual differences.

What you can do
Participants need to develop strategies to increase effectiveness in working with people who are "different." Be clear about the definition of "normal," about formal and informal norms, and about the kinds of difference that need to be addressed. Consider those issues individually and systemically. The steps to increasing effectiveness are easy to define but hard to implement.

- Talk with someone who can help you understand the barriers you are up against when working with an individual who is "different." Then go to the person who is different and say something like, "I want you to know that I have never worked with someone who has your disability. I hope it is all right if I ask you how to be helpful. That will help me in giving assignments, and improve the working of our entire team."

- Read about the group of people you would like to learn more about. Articles on women, blacks, and other groups should be included in your reading material for professional development.

- Get help from community resources or agencies versed in the area that you want to learn more about. Most groups of "different" people have organizations that serve as support networks. Employers would like to have central locations where information could be obtained about all groups, but most groups like to maintain a sense of identity. They believe that if they joined with other groups, their own individuality would be lost. For example, people of color may find it hard to affiliate with a group for people with disabilities, for fear that the issues most pertinent to their own group would not be addressed.

  An organization concerned with productivity must exercise judgment about contacting an individual group, as opposed to relating to all different groups using a common frame of reference.

- Simulate an experience outside the realm of what you typically do, and record how you feel in the simulation. That will help you understand, accept, work with, and value situations and people who are different.

  For a class experiment, a graduate student had to explore something in her life that was a barrier for her. She chose to attend a church service. As a child, she had felt stifled by her church experience. As a young adult, the memories were getting in the way of her understanding how someone from the Christian faith could be in the same graduate program as she. Attending church as an adult allowed her to revisit her feelings and expand her understanding that she didn't have to go back to her old beliefs. At the same time, it helped her accept that Christianity could be important to others.

Issues of religious preference may affect the workplace when work assignments are given, especially on certain holidays. What happens when an employee requests a specific day off to observe a religious holiday not listed in the company manual? Valuing difference will allow you to understand the employee's position in relation to company policy or to the request of another employee.

- Consider yourself both a teacher and learner; be clear about what you do not know. If work with an individual reveals that a policy change is warranted, change it. If not, take steps to help the person understand what is expected. Some people in positions of authority confuse valuing or working with people who are different with giving away power. The truth is, working with people who are different will provide an opportunity to increase the economic base through the sharing of talents and gifts from different perspectives.

  A manager noted that a person from a different country was late four days in a row. Instead of making judgmental statements, he merely asked what was happening. The employee replied, "The bus left me." The manager's reply was, "Try not to let the bus leave you tomorrow." From the employee's cultural perspective, the object created the problem; his view of time is that the task or expected functions of the job will still be completed. The manager's sensitivity to the individual allowed for the relationship to remain intact, but still conveyed the idea that it is important to be at work on time.

- Do not allow the person or group who is "different" to intimidate you. Get advice from others if you are not sure what to do. Managers of physically disabled employees report difficulty in disciplining them for fear of hurting their feelings. An assumption is made that people with physical disabilities cannot handle feedback.

The objective is to create a climate where a message of productivity and performance prevails. If personnel policies dictate that a particular group of people must remain on the job because of their ethnicity, a manager may believe that his or her hands are tied and preferential treatment is required. A balance of sensitivity and performance needs to be maintained.

- Examine a previous situation in which you were successful in working with someone who was "different." How might that experience apply in your current situation?

- Develop an action plan and make it happen. Be aware of timing and the political climate in striving for effectiveness in working with people who are different.

Basic Assumptions
It may be helpful to work from three basic assumptions:

- We are more alike than we are different. That simply means that even though we are different, our likeness comes in the pursuit of such goals as success, productivity, and teamwork.

- Each person has something unique to offer the workplace. The positive descriptions of what it feels like to be different should be promoted to help that assumption become reality. Remember, oneness does not mean sameness.

- Celebrate the differences in others. Celebration can only enhance productivity and profitability in the workplace.

The Chinese have a two-pronged definition for the word "crisis." It can mean either danger or opportunity. We are not in danger, but we have a wealth of opportunity to serve others. Working with people who are different provides those opportunities.

Three Basic Assumptions

- We are more alike than we are different
- Each person has something unique to offer the workplace
- Celebrate differences in others

Reprinted from Steve Hanamura, "Working With People Who Are Different," © June 1989, *Training and Development*, American Society for Training and Development. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

Family Influence on Racial Attitudes

This exercise helps you explore attitudes about race and how they may have originated in your family.

Goals

1. To help you explore early family influence on your attitudes about race
2. To help examine the relevance of these attitudes to your current life

Directions

A. Complete the sentences. Use a specific racial or cultural group (for example, Blacks, Chicanos, Italians, Jews).

   1. When I was growing up, __________ were seen as __________
      ____
      ____
   2. I recall that in my family __________ were talked about as __________
      ____
      ____
   3. The amount of actual contact my family had with __________ was
      ____
      ____
   4. As an adult my views about __________ are (similar) (different) from those of my family in the following ways: __________
      ____
      ____
   5. My children will learn that __________ are __________
      ____
      ____

B. Discuss your answers in small groups. What conclusions can you reach?

Reprinted from N. Colangelo, D. Dustin, and C. Foxley, *The Human Relations Experience: Exercises in Multicultural Nonsexist Education*, 1982, by permission of Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Pacific Grove, California.

Similarities and Differences

Understanding of various cultures can be improved by stressing similarities and differences.

Goals

1. To help you better define what similarities and differences you have with others
2. To help you realize that people, no matter how different they seem, have some similarities to others
3. To help you recognize that differences do not necessarily hamper communication or understanding

Directions

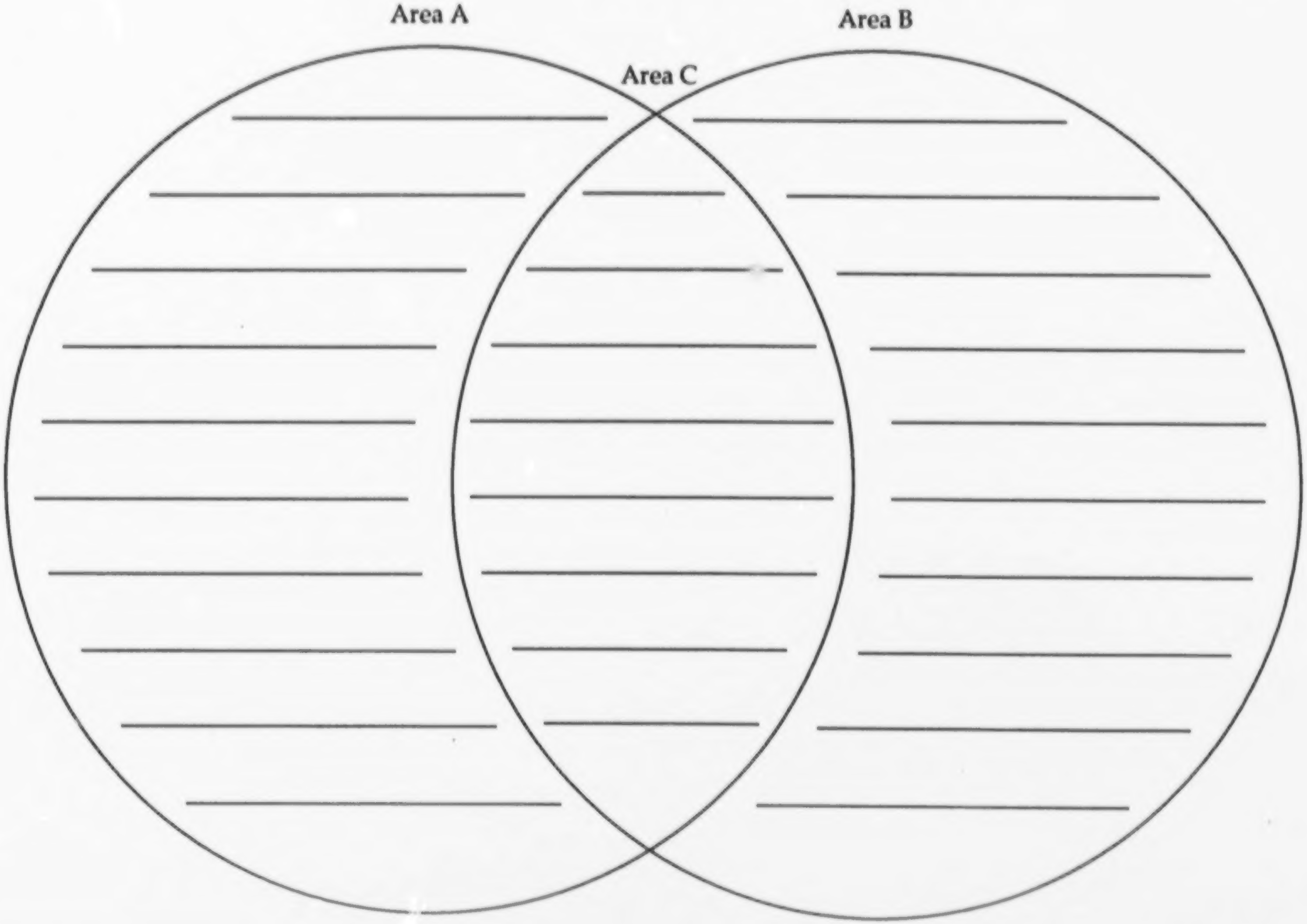
A. Work in pairs (one person is A, the other B).
B. Share some information about yourself.
C. List those things you two see as differences in the appropriate area on the diagram on the next page.
D. In area C list things that are similar.

Discussion

1. From what has been listed you should choose differences and similarities that you consider most important. What conclusions can be drawn from these?
2. You should discuss what attributes could foster communication and which could hamper it. What could be done to overcome the attributes that hamper communication?

Reprinted from N. Colangelo, D. Dustin, and C. Foxley, *The Human Relations Experience: Exercises in Multicultural Nonsexist Education,* 1982, by permission of Brooks/Cole Publishing, Pacific Grove, California.

Similarities and Differences—Diagram


Area A
Area C
Area B

Television Shows

This exercise is designed to examine the kinds of messages television gives regarding various cultures.

Goals

1. To examine typical television shows in terms of ethnic and cultural portrayals.
2. To examine patterns in television entertainment regarding ethnic groups and cultures.

Directions

A. Each of you is to watch a night of television broadcasts. It would be most beneficial if the class can decide who will watch which stations and which nights, so that over a week's time all nights and stations are covered.

B. After your observations answer the following:

1. In the shows you watched, what ethnic groups were featured?

2. What kinds of shows featured particular ethnic groups (for example, comedy, variety, talk shows, police, dramas, specials)?

3. Based on your observations of television shows, what statements can you make concerning various racial and cultural groups you observed?

Discussion

1. To what extent is television accurate in portraying the truth about various ethnic groups?
2. What evidence could be cited to verify the accuracy or inaccuracy?

Reprinted from N. Colangelo, D. Dustin, and C. Foxley, *The Human Relations Experience: Exercises in Multicultural Nonsexist Education*, 1982, by permission of Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Pacific Grove, California.

Accepting Others

Most of us are more comfortable with some types of differences than we are with other types.

Goals

1. To help you delineate your comfort with and acceptance of various groups
2. To help you explore your reasons for accepting some and not others

Directions

A. Circle the number from the Comfort/Acceptance Scale that best describes your feelings and attitudes regarding each of the 30 items listed in the Accepting Others form.

Comfort/Acceptance Scale

1—very comfortable/accepting
2—fairly comfortable/accepting
3—neutral/no opinion
4—fairly uncomfortable/unaccepting
5—very uncomfortable/unaccepting

B. Discuss your complete forms in small groups.

Discussion

1. Which groups do you find acceptable and which not? What are you reasons for accepting or not accepting? Do you see patterns in your responses? In the responses of the small group?

2. What conclusions can you draw based on this exercise?

3. What have you learned about yourself from this exercise? ________

____

____

____

Reprinted from N. Colangelo, D. Dustin, and C. Foxley, *The Human Relations Experience: Exercises in Multicultural Nonsexist Education*, 1982, by permission of Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Pacific Grove, California.

Group	I Am Comfortable/ Accepting			I Am Not Comfortable/ Not Accepting	
1. Neo-Nazi	1	2	3	4	5
2. Chicano	1	2	3	4	5
3. Afro-American	1	2	3	4	5
4. Wife abuser	1	2	3	4	5
5. Senile elderly person	1	2	3	4	5
6. Mentally retarded person	1	2	3	4	5
7. Catholic	1	2	3	4	5
8. Jew	1	2	3	4	5
9. Black Muslim	1	2	3	4	5
10. Italian	1	2	3	4	5
11. Prostitute	1	2	3	4	5
12. Homosexual	1	2	3	4	5
13. Drug pusher	1	2	3	4	5
14. Ex-convict	1	2	3	4	5
15. Ku Klux Klansman	1	2	3	4	5
16. Paraplegic	1	2	3	4	5
17. "Moonie"	1	2	3	4	5
18. Atheist	1	2	3	4	5
19. Iranian	1	2	3	4	5
20. Communist	1	2	3	4	5
21. Oriental-American	1	2	3	4	5
22. Overweight person	1	2	3	4	5
23. Genius	1	2	3	4	5
24. Alcoholic	1	2	3	4	5
25. Convicted rapist	1	2	3	4	5
26. Native American	1	2	3	4	5
27. Irish person	1	2	3	4	5
28. Millionaire	1	2	3	4	5
29. Cuban	1	2	3	4	5
30. Radical feminist	1	2	3	4	5

Racial and Cultural Stereotypes

Almost every race or culture is subjected to debilitating stereotypes. This exercise encourages thinking about the effects of these stereotypes as well as the feelings of individuals who are subject to them.

Goals

1. To recognize that various racial and cultural groups are subject to stereotypes
2. To attempt to understand the feelings of individuals subject to these stereotypes
3. To encourage you to examine the feelings you would have if you were subjected to stereotypes

Directions

A. Fill out the Racial and Cultural Groups form. (Add others that are appropriate to your specific region.)
B. Think of one (or more) stereotype that you would resent were you a member of this race or culture.
C. Describe how you would react to this stereotype.
D. In small groups discuss your responses.

Discussion

1. What patterns emerged about the kinds of stereotypes people would resent?
2. What reactions and feelings did people have about being subjected to such stereotypes?
3. What insight do you have into the feelings of members of particular racial or cultural groups who are subject to these stereotypes?

Reprinted from N. Colangelo, D. Dustin, and C. Foxley, *The Human Relations Experience: Exercises in Multicultural Nonsexist Education*, 1982, by permission of Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Pacific Grove, California.

Racial or Cultural Group	Stereotype(s) That I Would Resent If I Were a Member of This Group	My Reaction and Feelings about Being Subjected to This Stereotype(s)
1. Afro-American		
2. Puerto Rican		
3. Chicano		
4. Anglo-American		
5. Italian		
6. Irish		
7. Jewish		
8. Native American		
9. Amish		
10. Polish		
11. Chinese		
12. German		
Others:		

Perceptions of Differences

What if you suddenly had a different identity? How might your friends and family react to you if you were a member of a special population? This exercise leads you to explore these questions.

Goals

1. To increase your self-awareness
2. To stimulate you to consider what belonging to a different population would be like
3. To encourage you to discuss how you are perceived by a friend or family member

Directions

A. Assume a new identity. Have a different sex, age, race, or ability level.

____

(New Identity)

B. Think about how people who know you would react to you in your new identity. What would their reactions be?

1. Family ____________________________________

2. Friends ____________________________________

3. Teachers ____________________________________

4. Students ____________________

5. Employer ____________________

6. Other ____________________

C. As you review your responses to B, what insights do you have about these individuals and their attitudes? ____________________

D. Select a member from one of the above categories—for example, a family member. Explain the exercise and tell him or her the reactions you assumed he or she would have.

E. Explore with this person how accurate or inaccurate your assumptions were.

F. As a total group, discuss your own reflections about this exercise.

Dealing with diversity: Playing straight with a mixed deck

Try to imagine a sharp, responsible, effective manager today who has somehow been able to avoid learning anything about computers . . . Not too easy to picture, is it? We have all had to learn, most of us starting at an awkward "0," at least a little about computers because of the tremendous impact they have had on our worklife.

Now, try to imagine this same sharp and effective manager trying to pretend that if he stays in his office long enough, his suddenly diverse work force will somehow go back to being comfortably white and male. At which time he can come out of his office and start communicating again.

Yes, it's true. Despite the clearly changing face of the work force, some otherwise impeccable managers are forgetting that their responsibility for communicating means communicating with everyone.

Communications expectations

Today we are required to communicate effectively with people cross-culturally, through the generation gap, among races, between genders and across those subtle but pervasive barriers of class. No wonder it may feel uncomfortable—we've never been asked to do this before!

Unconsciously, although understandably enough, most of us hold the notion that our own reality is the only real one and that anything that doesn't comfortably fit within it is wrong, bad, unworkable or alien. At best, differences in others from this perspective are perceived as being irritating or inconvenient.

Global connectedness

We have always lived in a world of diversity. Irish, Jewish, Black, Polish, Hispanic, Asian and Italian groups were all highly visible contributors to the

Reprinted by permission of Bob Abramms and Diane Johns, ODT Inc., P.O. Box 134, Amherst, MA. (413) 549-1293.

early growth of our nation. It is only now that we are accepting the challenge to respond more expansively and sensitively to what Marshall McLuhan has called "the global village." Technological advances and the increasing electronic "connectedness" of the last 50 years has brought us closer to other parts of the globe than ever before. The world, in its great variety, is now spilling into our schools, our neighborhoods and being more accurately reflected in our work force.

For managers, this new mission of taking responsibility for communicating across differences is a particularly challenging invitation to growth. For just as flexibility in management styles (situational leadership) has become a widely used tool for increasing workplace effectiveness, flexibility in *styles of communication* is a further step in the same direction.

Management for the future

Now more than ever, learning to draw on the richness of a kaleidoscopic work force, expanding to be able to help all team members bring out their best efforts, is an astute managerial decision. In fact, the predicted work force shortage will see broader utilization of immigrant and handicapped workers within even the next 3 to 5 years.

White, male managers who continue to try to fall back along traditional and comfortable "white" communication patterns may be doomed in the domestic economy as well as in the global marketplace. Findings have shown that there is a definite physiological basis for the experience that women think, communicate and act very differently than men do. Even if a woman is of the same race and class as a man, he shouldn't be fooled into thinking her communication styles and frame of reference at work are the same as his.

Add the fact that many minorities do not feel their position in the organization has really improved much over the past few years, and it seems clear that the lack of alternatives to the white male club's management/communications styles has made it difficult for minorities and women to progress beyond the mid-range of corporate hierarchies.

So what's a sharp manager to do?
First of all, acknowledge that learning to communicate flexibly has benefits you want to obtain—personal, professional or organizational enrichment being among them. Having access to the much wider range of problem-solving skills, solutions, perspectives, approaches and input that a diverse work force brings is significant among those benefits.

Next, you can start to take a look at you. Where do you fit in the mosaic? What is your ethnic or cultural background, social or economic class/status, education level (and favorite learning mode—do you like to read and see, listen or do?), what interests you, what inspires you and gives you a sense of fulfillment?

Answering these questions can begin to put you in touch with an essential reality—a touchstone for communication with others—that everyone else that you work and play and deal with is as complex, contradictory, talented and vulnerable as you are—all in ways that come in different colors, packages and speech patterns.

Pretty basic stuff, but so easy to forget.

Action step—find out!
So how does this translate to the daily interaction of work? Apprising yourself of some of the main traits about, or communication pitfalls with, the people that you work with is a commendable next step. Finding out, for example, that the uncomfortable "closeness" you may feel with your Italian or Arabic colleagues may have everything to do with how those cultures experience physical space between people—the closer the better in those cultures, to express interest, enthusiasm and loyalty. People with northern European backgrounds tend to find this proximity invasive or unpleasant.

With the sharp increase in international business, there is a wealth of material available on these kinds of cultural differences. Your local library can be a good place to begin looking. Remember, too, as you read about cultural differences, that even second and third generation members are still influenced by family environments pervaded by these same subliminal cultural styles.

Action step—the other's shoes
Next, you might want to consider an exercise your parents may have introduced you to when you were a child if you ever called attention to "differences" in others. To give children a sense of what being blind, or handicapped in some way is like, parents often invite a child to imagine "what it would be like to be in the other person's shoes."

Native Americans cultivate understanding, compassion and harmony by withholding judgment on another until they have "walked a mile in the other's moccasins." Try to imagine for a while what it would be like to be new in this country, to live with and be responsible for a large number of family members, not to speak or understand English well or at all, to spend most of your life in a wheelchair, to be pregnant, to not have access to a full range of mental abilities or emotional control.

More help—company and community resources
If you find that you have trouble with all this shoe-changing and want some help, or if it opened up some doors and you want to step inside, you may want to explore any programs your company may offer in training on "differences." Forward thinking organizations are now actively promoting training programs that help employees to appreciate working with others who might be different than they are. Check with your human resource department to see what's available.

Often continuing education programs, civic, community or religious groups have "civility" courses, or "introduction to other cultures" events. Local newspapers frequently have listings of those offerings.

Back at the office
On an interpersonal level, you can plunge in by simply expressing honestly your concerns and confusions:

> "I get uneasy when you don't look at me when we speak. Is something wrong that I need to know about?" (Direct eye contact, especially for some Asian cultures, is considered rude.)
>
> "I'm never sure how much feedback to give you. I'd like to support your work performance but I can't tell if my suggestions are helpful or even welcome. Can you tell me?" (Many times black/white speech patterns lead whites into unnecessary "over-explaining" to blacks.)
>
> "I just don't know sometimes if I should open the door for you or not. I'd like to be helpful, but I don't want to offend you. Would this have been an appropriate time to help or not?" (A concern for many around people with limited physical ability. Sometimes perplexing as a gender issue, too!)

Treating another person naturally and affirming the innate human dignity that we all share goes a long way towards opening up communication.

The golden ace
And, along those same lines, we have a golden ace up our sleeve—a technique that's fast, relatively easy, and it works: *"Treat the other person as though she or he were in disguise."* The level, friendly, honest encounter that can happen as a result of maintaining this perspective can override a myriad of cultural details.

Acceptance, good will and respect are the cornerstones of successful communication and exchange—ones that cross all barriers of class, gender, race and ability.

–by Bob Abramms and Diane Johns

Bob Abramms is senior associate and Diane Johns is the former director of product development at ODT Incorporated, an Amherst, Massachusetts-based publishing and consulting firm specializing in upward influence and managing cultural diversity.